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THROUGH FINLAND IN CARTS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

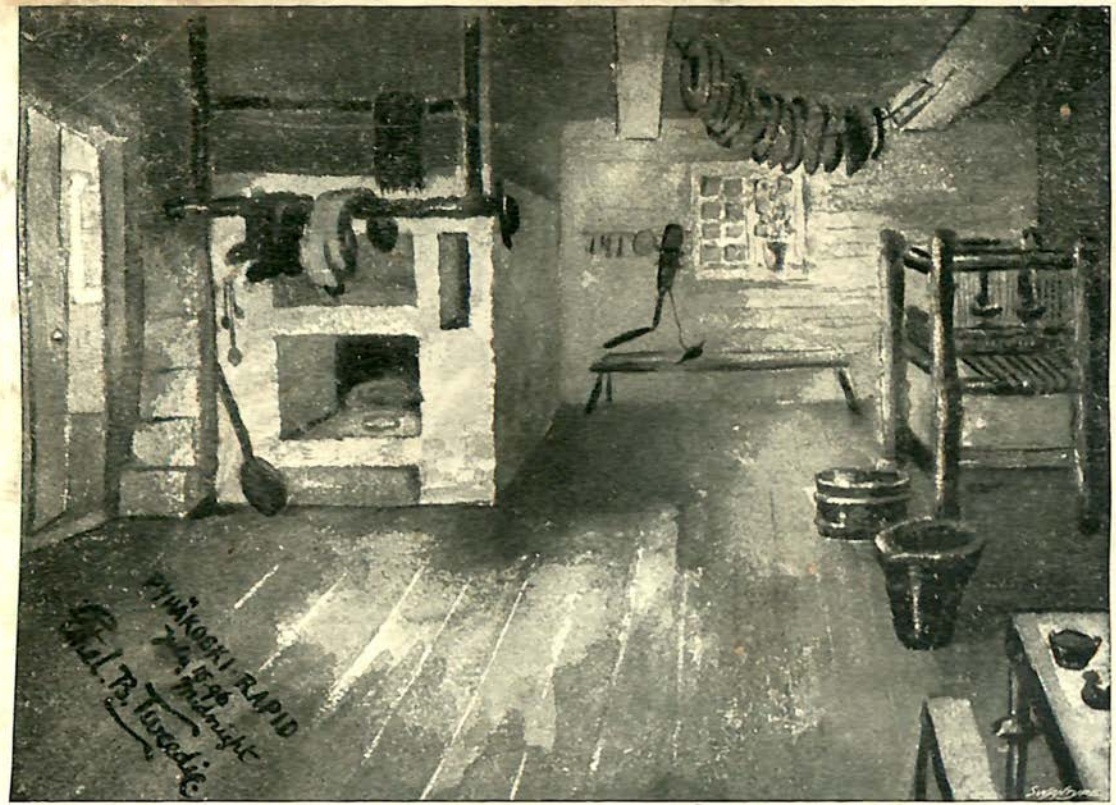
A GIRL'S RIDE IN ICELAND.

A WINTER JAUNT TO NORWAY.

DANISH *VERSUS* ENGLISH BUTTER-MAKING.

THE OBERAMMERGAU PASSION-PLAY.

WILTON, Q.C., OR LIFE IN A HIGHLAND SHOOTING-BOX.



MIDNIGHT HAVEN OF REST

(From a water-colour sketch by the Author)

THROUGE FINLAND

IN

CARTS

56834

BY

MRS. ALEC TWEEDIE

AUTHOR OF 'A WINTER JAUNT TO NORWAY,' 'A GIRL'S RIDE IN ICELAND' ETC. ETC. ETC.

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TO MY HUSBAND

ALEC

TO MY DEAREST FRIEND

SIR JOHN ERIC ERICHSEN, BART., F.R.S., LL.D.

TO MY FATHER

DR. GEORGE HARLEY, F.R.S., F.R.C.P.

ALL OF WHOM DIED SUDDENLY WITHIN A SPACE OF FIVE MONTHS

I DEDICATE THESE PAGES IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE

OF THEIR LOVING INTEREST IN MY WORK

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CHAPTER I

OUR FIRST PEEP AT FINLAND

FINLAND, or, as the natives call it, *Suomi*, is a country of lakes and islands; a vast continent about which strangers hardly know anything, beyond such rude facts as are learnt at school, viz., that "Finland is surrounded by the Gulfs of Finland and Bothnia on the South and West, and bordered by Russia and Lapland on the East and North," and yet Finland is larger than our own England, Scotland, Ireland, ay, and the Netherlands, all put together!

When we first thought of going to *Suomi*, we naturally tried to procure a Finnish guide-book and map; but no guide-book was to be obtained in all London, except one small pamphlet about a dozen pages long; while at our best-known map shop the only thing we could find was an enormous cardboard chart costing thirty shillings! No one ever dreamed of going to Finland apparently. Nevertheless, Finland is not the home of barbarians, as some folk imagine, neither do Polar bears walk continually about the streets, nor reindeer pull sledges in summer,—items that have several times been suggested to the writer!

Nothing daunted by want of information, however, we packed up our traps and started.

We were three women, my sister, Frau von Lilly—a born Finlander—and the humble writer of the following pages. That was the beginning of the party, but it in-

creased in numbers as we went along—a young man here, a young girl there, an old man, or an old woman, joined us at different times, and, alas, left us again!

Having made charming friends in that far-away land, and picked their brains for information as diligently as the epicure does the back of a grouse for succulent morsels, we finally—my sister and I—jogged home again alone.

This looks bad in print! The reader will say, "Oh! how disagreeable they must have been, those two, that every one should have deserted them," but this would be a mistake, for we flatter ourselves that we really are rather nice! and only "adverse circumstances" deprived us of our friends one by one.

It was on a brilliant sunny morning early in June 1896 that the trim little ship *Urania* steamed between the many islands round the coast to enter, after four and a half days' passage from Hull, the port of *Helsingfors*. How many thousands of posts, growing apparently out of the sea, are to be met with round the shores of Finland? Millions, we might say; for not only the coast line, which is some 800 miles in length, but all the lakes and fjords through which steamers pass are marked out most carefully by wooden stakes, or near the large towns by stony banks and painted signs upon the rocks of the islands. Sometimes the *skär* (channels) are so dangerous that the little steamers have to proceed at half-speed, carefully threading their way in and out of the posts, as a drag at Hurlingham winds its course between barrels at the four-in-hand competitions.

Many places, we learnt, are highly dangerous to attempt at night, especially the Gulf of Bothnia, where the stakes are put down by Government boats in the spring after the ice has gone, and are taken up again in November before it forms, because for about seven months all sea traffic is impossible. Sometimes the channels are so narrow and shallow that the screw of the steamer has to be stopped, while the vessel glides through between the rocks, the

very revolutions of the screw drawing more water than can be allowed in that particular *skär*. At other times we have seen the steamer kept off some rocky promontory where it was necessary for her to turn sharply, by the sailors jumping on to the bank and easing her along by the aid of stout poles; or again, in the canals we have known her towed round particular points by the aid of ropes. In fact, the navigation of Finland is one continual source of amazement.

Finland is still rising out of the sea! Rocks that were marked one hundred and fifty years ago at the water's edge, now show that the sea has gone down four or five feet. This is particularly noticeable in the north: where large ships once sailed, a rowing boat hardly finds waterway. Seaports have had to be moved. Slowly and gradually Finland is emerging from the waters, just as slowly and gradually the people are making their voice heard among other nations.

The first impressions on entering the Finnish harbour of *Helsingfors* were very pleasing; there was a certain indefinable charm about the scene as we passed in and out among the thickly-wooded islands, or dived between those strong but almost hidden fortifications of which the Russians are so proud. Once having passed these impregnable mysteries, we found ourselves in more open water, and before us lay the town with its fine Russian church of red brick with rounded dome, the Finnish church of white stone, and several other handsome buildings denoting a place of importance and considerable beauty. We were hardly alongside the quay before a dozen Finnish officials swarmed on board to examine the luggage, but no one seemed to have to pay anything; a small ticket stuck on the baggage saving all further trouble.

Swedish, Finnish, and Russian, the three languages of the country, were being spoken on every side, and actually the names of the streets, with all necessary information, are displayed in these three different forms of speech. Only

those who have travelled in Russia proper can have any idea of the joy this means to a stranger; it is bad enough to be in any land where one cannot speak the language, but it is a hundred times worse to be in a country where one cannot read a word, and yet once over the border of Russia the visitor is helpless. Vs becomes Bs, and such general hieroglyphics prevail that although one sees charming tram-cars everywhere, one cannot form the remotest idea where they are going, so as to verify them on the map,—indeed, cannot even tell from the written lettering whether the buildings are churches or museums, or only music halls.

Finnish is generally written with German lettering, Swedish with Latin, and the Russian in its own queer upside down fashion, so that even in a primitive place like Finland every one can understand one or other of the placards, notices, etc.

Not being in any particular hurry, we lingered on the steamer's bridge as the clock was striking the hour of noon, which, by the way, was a hundred minutes in advance of English time, and surveyed the strange scene. Somehow *Helsingfors* did not look like a Northern capital, and it seemed hard to believe, in that brilliant sunshine, that for four or five months during every year the harbour is solidly ice-bound.

Yet the little carriages, a sort of droschky, savouring of Petersburg, and the coachmen (*Isvoschtschik*) certainly did not come from any Southern or Western clime. These small vehicles, which barely hold a couple of occupants and have no back rest, are rather like large perambulators, in front of which sits the driver, whose headgear is of beaver, like a squashed top hat, very broad at the top, narrowing sharply to a wide curly brim, which curious head-covering, well forced down over his ears, is generally ornamented with a black velvet band, and a buckle, sometimes of silver, stuck right in the front.

Perhaps, however, the most wonderful part of the *Suomi* Jehu's attire are his petticoats. He has a double-breasted

blue-cloth coat fastening down the side, which at the waist is pleated on to the upper part in great fat folds more than an inch wide, so that from behind he almost looks like a Scheveningen fishwife; while, if he be not fat enough for fashionable requirements, he wears an additional pillow before and behind, and ties a light girdle round his waist to keep his dress in place.

All this strange beauty can be admired at a very cheap rate, for passengers are able to drive to any part of the town for fifty *penniä*, equal to fivepence in English money. These coachmen, about eighty inches in girth, fascinated us; they were so fat and so round, so packed in padding that on hot days they went to sleep sitting bolt upright on their box, their inside pillows and outside pleats forming their only and sufficient support. It was a funny sight to see half a dozen *Isvoschtschiks* in a row, the men sound asleep, their arms folded, and their heads resting on their manly chests, in this case cuirassed with a feathery pillow!

Over the horses' withers, drawing these Finnish carriages, are those strange wooden hoops so familiar on the Russian droschky, but perhaps most extraordinary of all are the strong shafts fixed inside the wheels, while the traces from the collar are secured to the axle itself outside the wheel! That seemed a novelty to our mind anyway, and reminded us of the old riddle, "What is the difference between an inside Irish car and an outside Irish car?" "The former has the wheels outside, the latter has the wheels inside."

Queer carts on two wheels were drawn up along the quay to bear the passengers' luggage to its destination, but stop—do not imagine every one rushes and tears about in Finland, and that a few minutes sufficed to clear the decks and quay. Far from it; we were among a Northern people proverbially as dilatory and slow as any Southern nation, for in the extreme North as in the extreme South time is *not* money,—nay, more than that, time waits on *every* man.

Therefore from the bridge of our steamer we heard much talking in strange tongues, we saw much movement of

queerly-dressed folk, but we did not see much expedition, and before we left Finland we found that the boasted hour and forty minutes advance on the clock really meant much the same thing as our own time, for about this period was always wasted in preparations, so that in the end England and Finland were about quits with the great enemy. Two delightful Finnish proverbs tell us, "Time is always before one," "God did not create hurry," and, as a nation, Finns gratefully accept the fact.

Every one seemed to be met by friends, showing how rarely strangers visit the land. Indeed the arrival of the Hull boat, once a week, is one of the great events of *Helsingfors* life, and every one who can goes down to see her come in.

A delightful lady—a Finlander—who had travelled with us, and had told us about her home in Boston, where she holds classes for Swedish gymnastics, was all excitement when her friends came on board. She travels to *Suomi* every year, spending nearly three weeks *en route*, to enjoy a couple of months' holiday in the summer at her father's parsonage, near *Hangö*. That remarkably fine specimen of his race, Herr S———, was met by wife, and brother, and a host of students—for he returned from Malmö, victorious, with the Finnish flag. He, with twenty-three friends, had just been to Sweden for a gymnastic competition, in which Finland had won great honours, and no wonder, if the rest of the twenty-three were as well-made and well-built as this hardy descendant of a Viking race.

Then again the Finnish gentleman had to be transhipped with his family, his horses, his groom, and his dogs, to wait for the next vessel to convey them nearer to his country seat, with its excellent fishing close to Imatra. He was said to be one of the wealthiest men in Finland, although he really lives in England, and merely returns to his native country in the summer months to catch salmon, trout, or grayling.

Then—oh yes, we must not forget them—there were the emigrants, nearly sixty in number, returning from America

OUR SHIP IN WINTER

for a holiday. though a few declared they had made enough money and would not require to go back again. They had been very ill on the voyage, had looked shabby and depressed, but as they came within sight of their native land appeared on deck beaming with smiles, and dressed out wondrous fine, in anticipation of their home-coming.

But were they excited? Not a bit of it! Nothing excites a Finn. Although he is very patriotic he cannot lightly rise to laughter or descend to tears; his unruffled temperament is, perhaps, one of the chief characteristics of his strange nature.

Yes, every one seemed met by friends on that hot June day, and we were lucky too, for our kindly cicerone, Frau von Lilly, who had tempted us to Finland, and had acquaintances in every port, was welcomed by her brother and other relations, all of whom were so good to us that we left their land many weeks afterwards with the most grateful recollections of overwhelming hospitality.

Our welcome to Finland was most cordial, and the kindly greetings made us feel at once at home among a strange people, none of whose three languages we could talk; but, as one of them spoke French, another English, and a third German, we found no difficulty in getting along. Such servants as knew Swedish easily understood the Norwegian words we had learnt sufficiently well to enable us to get about on our two enjoyable and memorable visits to Norway,[1] although strange explanations and translations were vouchsafed us sometimes; as, for instance, when eating some very *stodgy* bread, a lady remarked, "It is not good, it is unripe dough" (pronounced like cough).

We looked amazed, but discovered that she meant that the loaf was not sufficiently baked.

As we drove along in the little droschky we passed the market, a delightfully gay scene, where all the butchers wore bright pink blouses or coats, and the women white handkerchiefs over their heads. We bumped over cobble stones

[1] *A Winter Jaunt to Norway.*

and across tram lines, little heeded by the numbers of bicyclists, both men and women, riding about in every direction.

Every one bicycles in Finland; in fact, the Finns are quite as advanced in this form of sport as we are in England. It is most amusing to notice the cycles stacked in the railway vans of that northern clime, while on the steamers it is nothing extraordinary to see a dozen or more cycles amongst the passengers' luggage. In the matter of steamers, the companies are very generous to the cyclist, for he is not required to take a ticket for his machine, which passes as ordinary baggage.

About two years ago cycling first began to be introduced into *Helsingfors;* and so quickly did the idea *catch on* that now, in the remote villages of *Suomi*, the *velocipede*, as they are pleased to call it, is a well-known institution. Needless to say, the machines are nearly all of English or American make, and very excellent they are, for it does not seem to be worth the Finlander's while to import a second-rate article; consequently, when he does go in for a thing he buys it of the best.

Although we supply the Finlanders with machines, we might take a lesson from them in the matter of registration. At the back of every saddle in large figures was engraved the number, bought at the time of registration for four marks (three shillings and fourpence), consequently, in case of accident or theft, the bicycle could immediately be identified; a protection alike for the bicyclist and the person to whom through reckless riding an accident is caused.

Helsingfors, although the capital, is not a large town, having only about 70,000 inhabitants, but there are nearly 3000 registered bicycles plying its streets. The percentage of riders is enormous, and yet cycling is only possible for about five months every year, the rest of the time the country being covered with snow and ice. Here we pass a Russian officer (for be it understood the Grand Duchy of Finland belongs to Russia) who is busy pedalling

along, dressed in his full uniform, with his sword hanging at his side. One might imagine a sword would be in the way on a cycle; but not at all, the Finland or Russian officer is an adept in the art, and jumps off and on as though a sword were no more hindrance than the spurs which he always wears in his boots. There is a girl student —for the University is open to men and women alike, who have equal advantages in everything, and among the large number who avail themselves of the State's generosity are many cycling dames.

The Finlander is brave. He rides over roads that would strike terror into our souls, for even in towns the cobble stones are so terrible that no one, who has not trudged over Finnish streets on a hot summer's day, can have any idea of the roughness. A Finlander does not mind the cobbles, for as he says, "they are cheap, and wear better than anything else, and, after all, we never actually live in the towns during summer, so the roads do not affect us, and for the other months of the year they are covered with snow, so that they are buried sometimes a foot or two deep, and then sledges glide happily over them."

It is over such stones that the cyclist rides, and the stranger pauses aghast to see him being nearly bumped off his machine—as we have ourselves bumped towards the bottom of a steep hill when coasting—and not apparently minding it in the least, judging by the benign smile playing upon his usually solemn physiognomy. He steers deftly in and out of the larger boulders, and soon shows us that he is a thorough master of his iron steed.

All the students of both sexes wear the most charming cap. In shape it closely resembles a yachting cap; the top is made of white velvet, the snout of black leather, and the black velvet band that encircles the head is ornamented in front by a small gold badge emblematic of the University. No one dare don this cap, or at least not the badge, until he has passed his matriculation examination.

White velvet sounds thriftless; but in Finland, in the

summer, it is very hot and dry; in fact, the three or four months of summer are really summer in all its glory. It is all daylight and there is no night, so that June, July, and August seem one perpetual midsummer day. For travelling or country rides, the Finland student wears a small linen cover over his white velvet cap, which is made to fix on so neatly that the stranger does not at first detect it is a cover at all. In the winter, the white cap is laid aside, and a black velvet one takes its place.

Among the lower orders the women work like slaves, because they must. Women naturally do the washing in every land, and in the Finnish waterways there are regular platforms built out into the sea, at such a height that the laundresses can lean over the side and rinse their clothes, while the actual washing is performed at wooden tables, where they scrub linen with brushes made for the purpose.

Yet it seemed to us strange indeed to see women cleaning the streets; huge broom in hand they marched about and swept the paths, while a whole gang of female labourers were weeding the roadways.

Women in *Suomi* do many unusual things; but none excited our surprise so much as to see half a dozen of them building a house. They were standing on scaffolding plastering the wall, while others were completing the carpentering work of a door; subsequently we learnt there are no fewer than 600 women builders and carpenters in Finland.

The Finns, though intellectually most interesting, are not as a rule attractive in person. Generally small of stature, thickset, with high cheek-bones, and eyes inherited from their Tartar-Mongolian ancestors, they cannot be considered good-looking; while the peculiar manner in which the blonde male peasants cut their hair is not becoming to their sunburnt skins, which are generally a brilliant red, especially about the neck where it appears below the light, fluffy, downy locks. Fat men are not uncommon; and their fatness is too frequently of a kind to

make one shudder, for it resembles dropsy, and is, as a rule, the outcome of liqueur drinking, a very pernicious habit, in which many Finlanders indulge to excess. There are men in *Suomi*—dozens of them—so fat that no healthy Englishman could ever attain to such dimensions; one of them will completely occupy the seat of an *Isvoschtschik*, while the amount of adipose tissue round his wrists and cheeks seems absolutely incredible when seen for the first time, and one wonders how any chair or carriage can ever bear such a weight. Inordinately fat men are certainly one of the least pleasing of Finland's peculiarities.

Top hats seemed specially favoured by Finnish gentlemen.

Flannel shirts and top hats are, to an English mind, incongruities; but in *Suomi* fashion smiles approvingly on such an extraordinary combination. At the various towns, therefore, mashers strolled about attired in very bright-coloured flannel shirts, turned down flannel collars, trimmed with little bows of silken cord with tassels to fasten them at the neck, and *orthodox tall hats.*

The Finnish peasant women are as partial to pink cotton blouses as the Russian peasant men are to red flannel shirts, and the bright colours of the bodices, and the pretty white or black handkerchiefs over their heads, with gaily coloured scarves twisted round their throats, add to the charm of the *Helsingfors* market-place, where they sit in rows under queer old cotton umbrellas, the most fashionable shade for which appears to be bright blue!

The market is a feature in Finland, and in a measure takes the place of shops in other countries. For instance, waggons containing butcher's meat stand in rows, beside numerous carts full of fish, while fruit and flowers, cakes and bread-stuffs in trucks abound. Indeed, so fully are these markets supplied, it seems almost unnecessary to have any shops at all.

The old market folk all drink coffee, or let us be frank at once and say chicory, for a really good cup of coffee is almost unknown in Finland, whereas chicory is grown

largely and drunk everywhere, the Finlander believing that the peculiar bitter taste they know and love so well is coffee. Pure coffee, brewed from the berry, is a luxury yet to be discovered by the Finlander.

As we drove along, we noticed at many of the street corners large and sonorous bells made of brass, and furnished with chains to pull them. We wondered what this might mean, and speculated whether the watchman went round and rang forth the hours, Doomsday fashion?

On asking information we were told—

"They are fire-bells, very loud, which can be heard at some distance."

"But does not a strong wind cause them to ring?"

"No; they must be pulled and pulled hard; but you had better not try, or you may be fined heavily."

So we refrained, and pondered over the fire-bells.

It is as necessary to have a passport in Finland as in Russia, for one must remember that Finland belongs to the country of the Tzars. But whereas in Russia a passport is demanded at once, one can stay in a Finnish town for three days without having to prove one's identity; any longer stay in a hotel or private house necessitates the passport being sent to the police. As the Finns are Russian subjects, it is a most extraordinary thing that a Finn should require a passport to take him in or out of Russia. Such, however, is the case, and if a man in *Wiborg* wishes to go to St. Petersburg to shop, see a theatre, or to spend a day with a friend, he must procure a passport for the length of time of his intended visit. This is only a trifle; nevertheless it is a little bit of red-tapism to which the Finlander might object. But it has its advantages, as the passport rigorously keeps anarchists, socialists, Jews, and beggars out of *Suomi*.

As Finland belongs to the Tzar, the press is severely restricted by the Censor, though not to the same extent as in Russia itself, where hardly a day passes without some paragraph being obliterated from every newspaper. Indeed, in St. Petersburg an English friend told us that during the

six years he had lived there he had a daily paper sent to him from London, and that probably on an average of three days a week, during all that time, it would reach him with all political information about Russia stamped out, or a whole page torn away.

On the 24th of June 1896 we ourselves saw some eight inches blackened over in the *Times*, and about the same length in that day's *Kölnische Zeitung* and *Independence Belge* totally obliterated. We received English papers pretty regularly during our jaunt through Finland, and what amazed us most was the fact that, although this black mark absolutely obliterated the contents, no one on receiving the paper could have told that the cover had been tampered with in the least, as it always arrived in its own wrapper, addressed in the handwriting we knew so well. It remained an endless source of amazement to us how the authorities managed to pull the paper out and put it in again without perceptibly ruffling the cover.

It is not unknown for a Finnish paper, when ready for delivery, to have some objection made to its contents, in which case it must not be distributed; consequently, a notice is issued stating that such and such a paper has been delayed in publication, and the edition will be ready at a later hour in the afternoon. The plain meaning of which is that the whole newspaper has been confiscated, and the entire edition reprinted; the objectionable piece being taken out. *Presshinder* is by no means uncommon.

Some hundred of years ago Finland went to sleep, and it was not until the year 1863 that she began to wake up and slowly realised that such things as art, music, and literature existed at all! Now, considering the marvellous strides in education the country has made, it seems extremely probable that, in a few years, she will take her position as one of the important countries of Europe.

Unfortunately, however, "a house divided against itself falleth," which is a very serious hindrance to progress. That *Suomi* is divided, every one who has studied Finnish politics

must know. With its Russian rule, its Finnish and Swedish proclivities, and its three languages, the country has indeed much to fight against.

For those who are interested in the subject of Home Rule, an Appendix will be found at the end of this volume.

Very important changes have, during the last thirty years, taken place in Finland. Less than half a century ago the whole country—at least the whole educated country—was Swedish at heart and Swedish in language. From Sweden Finland had borrowed its literature and its laws until Russia stepped in, when the Finn began to assert himself. The ploughman is now educated and raising his voice with no uncertain sound on behalf of his own country and his language, so that to-day the bulk of the land, really a Russian possession, belongs to the Finnish party, which carries all votes before it.

The national air of Finland is not the well-known tune "God save the Queen," but *Maamme*, or *Vort Land* in Swedish ("Our Land").

The words were written by the famous poet, J. L. Runeburg, in Swedish, which was at that time the language of the upper classes, and translated into Finnish, the music being composed by Frederick Pacius. In Finnish the words are—

MAAMME

Oi maamme, Suomi, synnyinmaa, soi sana kultainen!
Ei laaksoa, ei kukkulaa, ei vettä rantaa rakkaampaa,
Kuin kotimaa tää pohjainen, maa kallis isien.

On Maamme köyhä, siksi jää jos kultaa kaipaa ken.
Sen kyllä vierat hylkäjää, mut meille kallein maa on tää
Kanst' salojen ja saarien se meist' on kultainen.

Oratpa meistä rakkahat kohinat koskien,
Ikuisten honkain huminat, täht' yömme, kesät kirkkahat
Kaikk', kaikki laulain loistaen mi lumos' sydämen.

Täss' auroin, miekoin, miettehin isämme sotivat,
Kun päirä piili pilvihin tai loisti onnen paistehin,
Täss' Suomen kansan suurimmat he vaivat kokivat.

Ken taistelut ne kaikki voi kertoilla kansan tään,
Kun sota laaksoissamme soi ja haua nälän tuskat toi?
Sen vert' ei mittaa yksikään ei kärsimystäkään.

Täss' on se veri vuotanut edestä meidänkin,
Täss' ilonsa on nauttinut ja tässä huoltain huokaillut
Se kansa, jolle muinoisin kuormamme pantihin.

Täss' olla meidän mieluist' on ja kaikki suotuisaa;
Vaikk' onni mikä tulkohon, meill' isänmaa on verraton.
Mit' oisi maassa armaampaa, mit' oisi kalliimpaa?

Ja tässä täss' on tämä maa, sen näkee silmämme;
Me kättä voimme ojintaa, ja vettä rantaa osoittaa,
Ja sanoa: kas tuoss' on se, maa armas isäimme!

Jas loistoon meitä saatettais vaikk' kuttapilvihin,
Miss' itkien ei huoattais' vaan tähtein riemun sielu sais,
Ois tähän kurjaan kotihin halumme knitenkin.

Totmeden runon kotimaa, maa tuhatjärvinen,
Elamme sulta suojan saa, sä toivojen ja muistoin maa,
Ain' ollos onnen vaihdellen, sä vapaa, riemuinen.

Sun kukoistukses' kuorestaan kerrankin puhkeaa;
Viel' lempemme saa nousemaan sun toivos, riemus loistossaan,
Ja kerran laulus' synnyinmaa, korke emman kaiun saa.

When the *Maamme* is sung every one rises, the men take off their hats, and nearly all those present join in the song, their demeanour being most respectful, for a Finn is nothing if not patriotic.

Another very popular air is the following, written by Zachris Topelius, whose fairy tales are now being translated into English—

SINUN MAASI

(Finnish)

Laps' Suomen, älä vaihda pois
Sun maats ihanaa !
Sill' leipä vieraan karvast 'ois
Ja sana karkeaa.
Sen taivas, päiv' on loistoton,
Sen sydän sulle outo on.
Laps' Suomen, älä vaihda pois
Sun maatas ihanaa !

Laps' Suomen, kaunis sull 'on maa
Ja suuri, loistokas.
Veet välkkyy, maat sen vihoittaa,
Sen rant 'on maineikas.
Yö kirkas, päivä lämpöinen
Ja taivas tuhattahtinen,
Laps' Suomen, kaunis sull 'on maa
Ja suuri, loistokas.

Laps' Suomen, armas maasi taa
Siis muista ainiaan !
Sull 'onnea ja elämää
Ej muuall' ollenkaan.
Jos minne tiesi olkohon,
Niin juures' synnyinmaassas' on.
Laps' Suomen, armas maasi taa
Siis muista ainiaan !

DITT LAND

(Swedish)

O barn af Finland, byt ej bort
Din ädla fosterjord !
En främlings bröd är hårdt och torrt,
Och klanglöst är hans ord.
Hans sol är blek, hans himmel grå,
Hans hjerta kan ej dig förstå.
O barn af Finland, byt ej bort
Din ädla fosterjord.

O Finland's barn, ditt land är godt,
Ditt land är stort och skönt.
Dess jord är grön, dess haf är blått,
Dess strand af ära krönt.
Dess natt är ljus, dess sol är klar,
Dess himmel tusen stjernor har.
O Finlands barn, ditt land är godt,
Ditt land är stort och skönt.

Och derför, barn af Finland, minns
Ditt ädla fosterland !
Ej ro, ej lif, ej lycka finns
I fjerran från dess strand.
Hvarhelst din väg i verlden går,
Din rot är der din vagga står.
Och derför, barn af Finland, minns
Ditt ädla fosterland !

THY LAND[1]

(English)

O child of Finland, wherefore fly
Thy noble Fatherland ?
The stranger's bread is hard and dry
And harsh his speech and hand ;
His skies are lead, his heart is dead
Thy heart to understand.
O child of Finland, wherefore fly
Thy noble Fatherland ?

[1] Translated from the Swedish by Alfred Perceval Graves.

O Finland's heir, thy land is fair
And bright from bound to bound;
Her seas serene; no gayer green
On tree or lea is found.
Her sun 's a blaze of golden rays,
Her night an eve star-crowned.
O Finland's heir, no land more rare
Or nobly fair is found.

Then, child of Finland, ne'er forget
Thy noble Fatherland;
For peace of mind is not to find
Upon a stranger's strand.
To that bright earth that gave thee birth
Thou owest heart and hand.
Then fealty swear to Finland fair,
Our famous Fatherland.

We dined at several restaurants in *Helsingfors;* for, in the summer, the Finlanders live entirely out of doors, and they certainly make the most of the fine weather when they have it. Perhaps our brightest dining-place was on the island of *Högholmen,* to which little steamers ply continually; but as we arrived at the landing-stage when a vessel had just left, we engaged a boat to row us across. It was a typical Finnish boat, pointed at both ends, wide in the middle, and a loving couple sitting side by side rowed us over. They were not young, and they were not beautiful; in fact, they looked so old, so sunburnt, and so wrinkled, that we wondered how many years over a hundred they had completed. But, judging by the way they put their backs into the work, they could not have been as ancient as they appeared.

One of the first words one hears in Finland is *straxt,* which means "immediately," and we soon found it was in universal use. No order is complete without the word *straxt* as an addition, and, naturally, the stranger thinks what a remarkably punctual and generally up-to-time sort of people the Finns must be. But the voyager seems born to be disappointed. No Finn ever hurried himself for anybody

or anything; the word *straxt* means, at least, a quarter of an hour, and the visitor may consider himself lucky if that quarter of an hour do not drag itself out to thirty minutes!

A man asks for his bill. *Straxt* is the reply. He suggests his luggage being fetched downstairs, reminds the landlord that the *kärra* (little carts) were ordered for noon, now long past.

"*Straxt, straxt,*" is smilingly answered, but the landlord does not move—not he; what is to be gained by being in a hurry? why fidget? an hour hence is quite as good as the present quickly fleeting by. So soothing his conscience by the word *straxt*, he leisurely goes on with his work, and as "like master, like man," those below him do not hurry either, for which reason most things in Finland are dominated more by chance than ruled by time.

It is very annoying, it is often very exasperating, but there is a superb obstinacy, or shall we say calm, about the Finnish character that absolutely refuses to be bustled, or hurried, or jostled.

They are a grave, serious people, who understand a joke even less than the Scotch, while such a thing as chaff is absolutely unintelligible to them. Life to the Finns seems a very serious matter which can be only undertaken after grave thought and much deliberation. They lose much pleasure by their seriousness. They sing continually, but all their music is sad; they dance sometimes, but the native dances are seldom boisterous as in other lands. They read much and think deeply, for both rich and poor are wonderfully well educated; but they smile seldom, and look upon jokes and fun as contemptible.

The men and women enjoy great freedom. Educated in the same schools, they are brought up to ignore sex; the young folk can go out for a whole day together, walking or snow-shoeing, skating or sledging, and a chaperon is unheard of; yet in all social gatherings, as an antithesis to this, we find an unexpected restraint. At a party the men all con-

gregate in one room, or at one end of the table, leaving the women desolate, while the young of both sexes look askance at one another, and, in the presence of their elders, never exchange a word, in spite of their boasted freedom Society is paradoxical.

More than that, by way of discouraging healthy chatter and fun among the young people, the elder folk always monopolise conversation, two persons invariably discussing some particular point, while twenty sit silently round listening—result, that young men and women know little of one another if they only meet in society, and the *bon camaraderie* supposed to result from the system of mixed education is conspicuous by its absence. Everything is against it. The very chairs are placed round a room in such a way that people must perforce sit in a circle—that dreaded circle which strikes terror into the heart of an English hostess. Even in the balconies an enormous table, with chairs packed closely round it, is constantly in evidence, so that the circle is even to be found there, with the consequence that every one sits and stares at every one else, except the people who may or may not keep up a conversation. The strange part of the whole arrangement is that Finlanders do not understand how prim they really are socially, and talk of their freedom, their enormous emancipation, etc., as they sit at table, where the greater number of those present never dare venture to say anything, while the young men and women rarely even sit together. They apparently make up for lost time when away from their elders.

The people are most hospitable, to strangers particularly so, and certainly the flowers and the books and sweets we were given, to say nothing of invitations received to stay in houses after an hour's acquaintance, to dine or sup, to come here or go there, were quite delightful. They are generous to a remarkable degree, and hospitable beyond praise. Their kindness and thoughtfulness touch a warm chord in the heart of a stranger, and make him feel that Finland is a delightful country, and her people the staunchest

of friends. But, after this divergence, let us return to our first drive. Those slouching men in long jack boots, butcher's blouses of white and shapeless form, are Russian soldiers. Soldiers, indeed! where is the smartness, the upright bearing, the stately tread and general air of cleanliness one expects in a soldier? These men look as if they had just tumbled out of their beds and were still wearing night-shirts; even the officers appeared strange to our English ideas, although medals adorned their breasts and swords hung at their sides even when bicycling.

"Do you mix much with the Russians?" we asked one of our new friends.

"Hardly at all; they have conquered us, they rule us, they plant whole regiments among us, and they don't even take the trouble to understand us, or to learn our language. No, we keep to ourselves, and they keep to themselves; our temperaments are so different we could never mix."

And this is true. The position of Alsace-Lorraine towards Germany is much the same as that of Finland towards Russia. Both have been conquered by a country speaking another language from their own, and of totally foreign temperament to themselves.

Life in *Helsingfors* is very pleasant for strangers in the summer; but for the natives it has no attraction. Accustomed to a long and ice-bound winter, the moment May comes every family, possessed of any means, flits to the country for three or four months. All the schools close for twelve weeks, and the children, who have worked hard during the long dark winter, thoroughly enjoy their holiday. Summer comes suddenly and goes swiftly. The days then are long, as the nights are short, for in the North of Finland there is a midnight sun, and even in *Helsingfors*, during June, he does not set till about eleven, consequently it remains light all night—that strange weird sort of light that we English folk only know as appertaining to very early morning. As we sat finishing supper at the Kapellet, we were strongly reminded of 3 A.M. one morning, only a week or two before,

when we had bumped to Covent Garden to see the early market, one of London's least known but most interesting sights, in our friendly green-grocer's van, with Mr. and Mrs. Green-grocer for sole companions.

The Kapellet is a delightful restaurant in the chief street of *Helsingfors*, standing among trees, under which many seats and tables are placed, and where an excellent military band plays during meal times. Strange meal times they are too, for, after early coffee and roll, every one breakfasts between ten and twelve on meats with beer or wine, not an egg and fish breakfast such as we have, but a regular solid meal. Finlanders in towns dine from two to four, and sit down to supper between eight and ten, so that they have three solid meat meals a day—probably a necessity in such a climate—and drink wines and spirits at each of these functions, which so closely resemble one another that the stranger would have difficulty in knowing which was supper and which was breakfast.

In the summer mostly men frequent the Kapellet, for their wives and families are away at their villas on the islands. Apparently any one can build a villa on any island, and the moment he does so, like Robinson Crusoe, he is master of the situation. One does not require to pay more than a trifle for the site, and a beautiful wooden house can be erected in about two months for two or three hundred pounds. Parents who are well off generally have a nice island and a comfortable house, and when their sons and daughters marry, they build thereon small villas for them; thus whole families, scattered during the greater part of the year, come together every summer.

For this reason family life in Finland is delightful.

There are many thousand islands—millions, one might almost say, and therefore plenty of room for all. Finland is like a sponge; the lakes and islands being represented by the holes.

We lived in a flat at *Helsingfors*. Frau von Lilly's brothers had a delightful *étage*, with a dear old housekeeper,

and thither we went. Mina looked after our wants splendidly, and smiled upon us all day as strange sort of beings because we liked so much *hett vatten* (hot water). She was always opening our door and walking in, for no one ever dreams of knocking in Finland; standing before us, her hands folded on her portly form, she smiled and smiled again. *Mycket bra* (very nice), we repeated incessantly to her joy—but still she stayed, whether anxious to attend to our wants or to have a look at Englishwomen and their occupations we know not; one thing, however, is certain, that without a word in common we became fast friends. Her beautifully polished floors made us afraid to walk across them, and the large rooms, broad beds, and lots of towels came as a real treat after nearly five days at sea. Every one lives in flats in the towns, there are only two private houses, and therefore long stone flights of stairs lead to the "appartement," as they do in Germany, while the rooms, with their enormous stoves and endless doors, remind one continually of *der Vaterland.*

From our flat, which stood high, we had a most glorious view. Immediately in front was the students' club, while beyond were the Parliament Houses, charming churches, the fine park given to the town by Henrik Borgström, the lovely harbour, the fortifications, and the deep, dark sea.

As the sun set we revelled in the glories visible from our balcony, and thoroughly enjoyed the charms of the Northern night. Our souls were steeped in that great silence.

It is during such nights as these that vegetation springs into existence. A day is like a fortnight under that endless sky of light. Therefore the almost tropical vegetation that so amazed us at times in this ice-bound land. For though the Gulf of Bothnia is frozen for many months, and the folk walk backwards and forwards to Sweden, the summer bursts forth in such luxuriance, that the flowers verily seem to have been only waiting under the snow to raise their heads. And the corn is ripe and ready for cutting before the first star is seen to twinkle in the heavens.

HELSINGFORS, THE CAPITAL OF FINLAND

Just outside our window, which looked away over the Russian and Lutheran churches to the sea, we watched a house which was being built, all day and all night, with some interest.

The town stands either on massive glacial rocks, or, in other parts that have been reclaimed from the sea, on soft sand; in the latter case the erection has to be reared on piles. For the foundation of the house mentioned, long stakes, about 20 feet in length, were driven into the ground. Above this pile a sort of crane was erected, from which hung a large heavy stone caught by iron prongs. Some twenty men stood round the crane, and with one "Heave oh!" pulled the stone up to the top, where, being let loose, it fell with a tremendous thud upon the head of the luckless pile, which was driven with every successive blow deeper into the earth. When all the piles were thus driven home, 4 or 5 feet apart, rough bits of rock or stone were fitted in between them, and the whole was boarded over with wood after the fashion of a flooring, on top of which the house itself was built.

Helsingfors is very advanced in its ideas; has electric light everywhere, telephones in each house, etc.; nevertheless, it only possesses one large carriage, and that is a landau which belongs to the hotel.

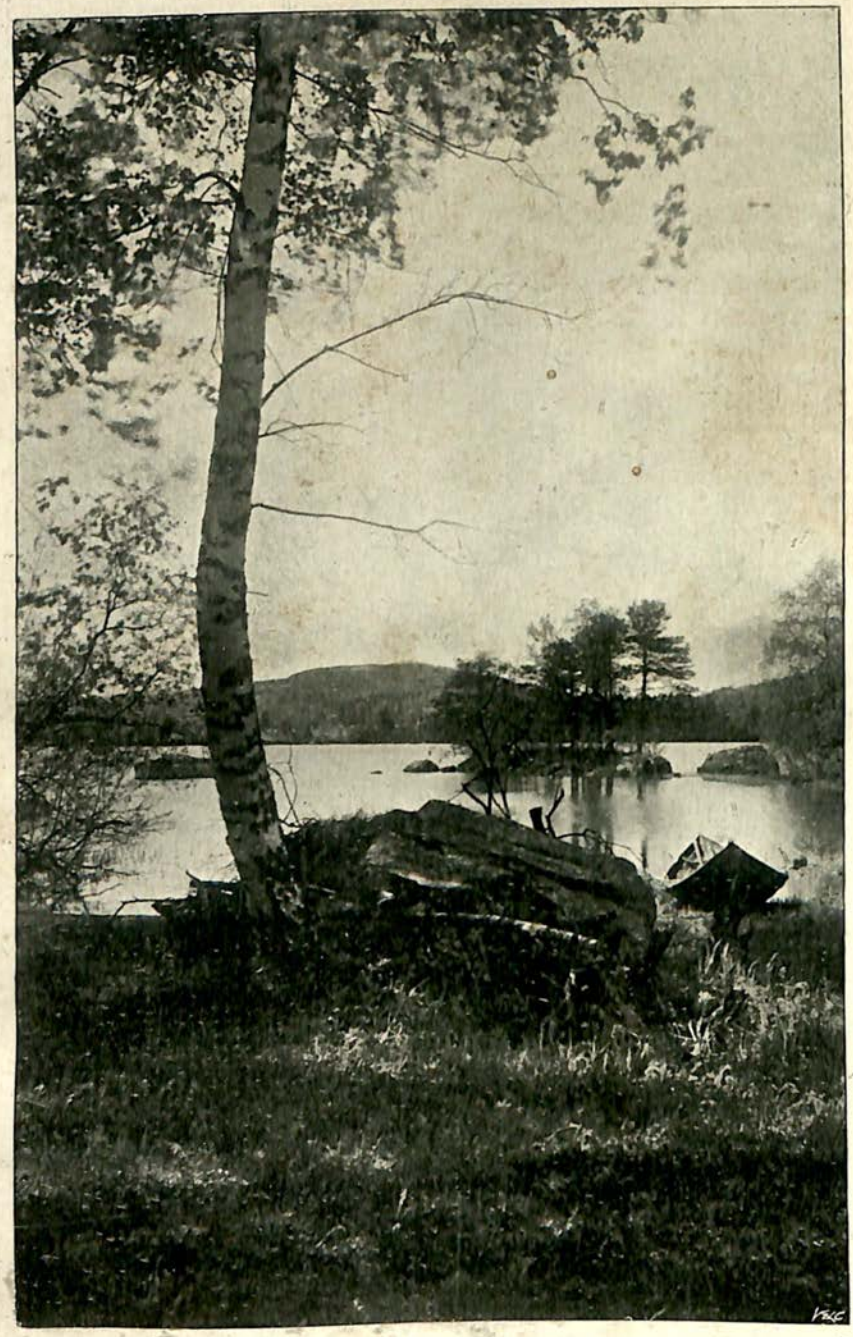
In this splendid vehicle, with two horses and a coachman bedecked like an English church beadle, we went for a drive, and so remarkable was the appearance of our equipage that every one turned round to look at us, and, as we afterwards learned, to wonder who we could possibly be, since we looked English, spoke German, and drove out with Finlanders!

Many happy days might be passed in *Helsingfors*, which contains museums and various places of interest. But it is essentially a winter town, and, as all the smart folk had flown and the windows were as closely shut as those of London in August and September, we hurried on to gayer and quainter scenes, which unfolded many strange experi-

ences, or this summer trip to Finland would never have been written.

During the ten weeks we were in *Suomi* we slept in twenty-six different beds. Beds, did we say? Save the mark! We slept under twenty-six different *circumstances*, would be more to the point, for our nights of rest, or unrest, were passed in a variety of ways—in beautiful brass bedsteads with spring mattresses; in wooden boxes dragged out until they became a bed, the mattress being stuffed with the *luikku* or *ruopo* plant, which makes a hard and knotty couch. We slept in the bunks of ships, which for curiosity's sake we measured, and found seldom exceeded 18 inches in width; or we lay on the floor with only a rug dividing us from the wooden boards; or we reposed on a canvas deck-chair, which originally cost about five shillings in London; we even dozed on the top of a dining-room table; and last, but not least, to avoid giving ourselves up as a meal to unwelcome visitors, we avoided beds altogether, and slept on the top of a grand piano, or, more properly speaking, an old-fashioned spinet, the notes of which gave forth a hard and tinny sound when touched.

It must not be imagined from this that there were not beds, for beds were generally procurable, lots of beds, in fact, the mattresses piled one on the top of another. BUT ——well, we preferred the spinet!



OUR ISLAND HOME

CHAPTER II

A FINNISH COUNTRY-HOUSE

A SEVENTEEN hours' trip in the *Kaiser Wilhelm* along the coast brought us from *Helsingfors* to *Wiborg*. The passage lay between innumerable islands, and every landing-place was thickly strewn with wood ready for export.

Finland is a primitive country, and we could not help smiling at the spectacle of a family removal. When changing residences it is evidently not considered necessary to pack up anything, consequently the entire contents of a house were put on board and removed from the ship without any wrappings whatsoever. The mattresses and the blankets were not even tied together.

Pictures were all left loose, looking-glasses stood uncovered, yet, thanks to the gentleness and honesty of the Finnish sailors, nothing appeared to get broken, and when we left the quay we saw the owner of these chattels standing complacently in the midst of his household gods, from which, judging by the serenity of his smile, nothing had been stolen or lost.

As we neared *Wiborg* we were all excitement as to what a visit to a country-house would be like, especially as we were going among strangers, having been most hospitably invited to stay with the relations of our Finnish friend on their summer island-home of *Ilkeäsaari*.

As the *Kaiser Wilhelm* hove-to alongside the quay, we were warmly welcomed by the English and American Con-

suls and Baron Theodore von B———. There were many passengers, but not much luggage, and consequently, by the time we had exchanged a few words of greeting, we discovered that every one of our boxes had been placed singly in state on the seat of separate droschkies. The row of five Russian-dressed cabbies were much disappointed when they found that the many fares they had anticipated were not in store for them, and that all the luggage was to go upon one cart sent for the purpose, while the solitary landau and pair in waiting was our host's private carriage, intended to bear us some three hours' drive to his quaintly situated residence.

Passing the old castle of *Wiborg* with its modern red roof and many centuries of Swedish history, then the palace of the Governor, to say nothing of numbers of villa residences further on, where the folk of St. Petersburg—only two hours distant by train—settle down for the summer to enjoy sea-bathing, we plunged into a charming pine-wood, through which the roadway was so narrow that the trees literally swished the carriage as it passed. Drawing up suddenly we discovered that a stretch of water divided us from our island home, and as we were in a carriage, and there was no bridge, it seemed for a moment as if further progress were impossible.

Nothing of the kind, however, the carriage was calmly driven on to a kind of wide barge made for the purpose, the horses' noses being reflected in the water into which they peered. So clear were the reflections that evening, that the butterflies fluttering overhead were so distinctly visible in the water that it seemed almost impossible to believe them other than denizens of the lake along with the fishes.

The picturesque-looking man, wearing a pink cotton shirt and slouch hat, who had been waiting for our arrival, came on to the floating bridge beside us, and by means of pulleys and ropes, to work which he turned a handle, ferried us across to the opposite bank. This was a private arrangement and very ingenious, and away we trotted merrily

through the pines, the earth, moss-grown and fern-strewn, intersected here and there by massive boulders of rock.

So rocky indeed was the road in parts that the carriage was driven over huge blocks of granite, while distinct marks of past glacial movement were everywhere visible.

Ah! there was the house, much larger than a villa, entirely made of wood, except for the stone foundations containing the cellars. The solid trees of which it was built were painted white, so that it looked very sunny and cheerful. A flight of wooden steps led to the front door, and to the numerous balconies by which, Finnish fashion, the house was nearly surrounded.

The warmest welcome awaited us; we were received as though we had been old and dear friends, instead of total strangers from a foreign land. Our host, the Captain and his Fru, were, luckily for us, excellent German scholars; indeed all the family spoke that language fluently, while some of the members could also speak English.

Our hostess's first exclamation when we arrived at her beautiful country home was an inquiry as to the contents of the large hold-all.

"Rugs," we replied, "and fur coats."

"Rugs and fur coats," she exclaimed in amusement. "What for?"

"For Finland of course," we answered.

"Did you think Finland was cold then?" she asked.

"Certainly," we returned, "so we have each brought a rug and a fur-lined coat."

She laughed and said, "Far better to have brought cotton frocks."

It was our turn now to be amazed, and we asked her what she meant by cotton frocks.

"Why, do you not know that our summer is much hotter than it is in England—it is shorter, but much warmer."

We were surprised. But she was right, as subsequent events proved, and our bundle of rugs was an everlasting

joke during the whole of our journey through Finland, for having brought them we would not part with them, although during the whole of June, July, and part of August, we never undid them once nor opened an umbrella, except one night while descending the famous *Ulcá* rapids, when, if we had owned all the furs in Britain, we could not have kept ourselves warm, so impregnated with cold damp was the atmosphere.

The island *Ilkeäsaari* is the scene of a huge family gathering each summer, after a truly Finnish fashion, for besides the big house, which is a sort of rendezvous for every one, the married sons and daughters have also their own summer residences within a stone's throw, the parents' house is a general dining-hall on Sundays and sometimes on other days.

Could any more delightful household be imagined? Clever and interesting in every way, with advanced ideas and wide interests, their home almost cosmopolitan in its English, French, and German literature, the elder folk ready and willing to chat on any theme in several tongues, the children talking Finnish to the servants, French to their governess, or Swedish to their parents, it was altogether an ideal family life in every sense, and more than charming to the strangers to whom *Ilkeäsaari* opened its doors and gave such a kindly welcome.

It is only in the homes of the people, rich and poor, one can learn anything of their characteristics. One may live in the large hotels of London, Paris, St. Petersburg, or Rome, and yet know almost nothing of the nations in whose midst we find ourselves. Food is the same all over Europe, waiters wear regulation black coats and white ties, drawing-rooms and reading-rooms contain the *Times*, the *Kölnische Zeitung*, or the *Novoé Vremya;* and when, guide-book in hand, we walk through the streets to visit the museums, we imagine we are learning the innermost lives of the people, of whom we generally know absolutely nothing. One week in the smallest private house teaches us more than one

month in the largest hotel in Europe. "All very well," says the reader, "but how are we to get into the private houses?"

Ah, there is the rub. We must open our own doors first; we must learn some languages, that golden key to travel, and when foreigners come into our midst with introductions, we must show them our homes and our lives if we want them to do the same for us. As it is, that humiliating cry is always sounding in our ears—

"English people never speak anything but English, and they are inhospitable to strangers; they are a proud nation and cold."

It is a libel, a hideous libel; but one which is, unfortunately, believed all over the Continent by foreigners not thoroughly acquainted with English folk in their own homes.

The Finnish summer is not long, but it is light and warm, the average temperature being as much higher than our own as it is lower in winter, and the people certainly enjoy both seasons to the full. Every country-house is surrounded by balconies, and on them all meals are served in the summer. We were fortunate enough to dine in many family circles, and to see much of the life of the rich, as well as the life of the poor.

One of the greatest features of a high-class Finnish meal is the *Smörgåsbord*. On a side-table in every dining-room rows of little appetising dishes are arranged, and in the middle stands a large silver urn, *brännvin*, containing at least a couple of liqueurs or schnapps, each of which comes out of a different tap. Every man takes a small glass of brandy, which is made in Finland from corn, and is very strong. No brandy is allowed to be imported from Russia or *vice versâ*, a rule very strictly adhered to in both countries. Having had their drink and probably *Skålad* ("I drink your health") to their respective friends, each takes a small plate, knife, and fork from the pile placed close at hand, and helps himself to such odds and ends as he fancies before returning to the dining-table to enjoy them. Generally four or five things are heaped on each plate, but as

they are only small delicacies they do not materially interfere with the appetite. Usually in summer the *Smörgåsbord* contains—

Salt, graf lax, raw or smoked salmon.

Rädiser, radishes.

Ost, cheese of various kinds, shaved very thin and eaten with black bread and butter, *Bondost* and *Baueruk* being two favourite kinds among the peasantry.

Kaviar, which is quite excellent and unlike anything we have in England, being the whole eggs of the sturgeon instead of a messy black compound.

Renstek, smoked reindeer, which is not nearly so nice as it is when eaten fresh in the winter in Norway.

Ägg, cold hard-boiled eggs cut in slices and arranged with sardines or anchovies.

Ost omelette, a delicious sort of custard or omelette, made with cheese and served hot, although everything else on the side-table is cold.

Mushrooms cooked in cream is another favourite dish.

Then small glass plates with slices of cold eel in jelly, salmon in jelly, tongue, ham, potted meat, etc., complete the *Smörgåsbord,* which was often composed of fifteen or twenty dishes.

These delicacies are many of them very nice, but as the same things appear at each meal three times a day, one gets heartily sick of them in the end, and, to an English mind, they certainly seem out of place at breakfast time.

There are many excellent breads in Finland—

Frans bröd is really French bread; but anything white is called *Frans bröd,* and very good it is, as a rule.

Råg bröd, or rye bread, is the ordinary black bread of the country, made in large flat loaves.

Hålkaka, the peasants' only food in some parts, is baked two or three times a year, so they put the bread away in a loft or upon the kitchen rafters; consequently, by the time the next baking day comes round it is as hard as a brick. A knife often cannot cut it. It is invariably sour, some of

the last mixing being always left in the tub or bucket, so that the necessary acidity may be ensured.

Knäckebröd is a thin kind of cake, made of rye and corn together, something like Scotch oatcake, with a hole in the middle, so that it may be strung up in rows like onions on a stick in the kitchen. When thin and fresh it is excellent, but when thick and stale a dog biscuit would be about equally palatable.

Wiborgs kringla, called in Finnish *Wiipurin rinkeli*, is a great speciality, its real home and origin being *Wiborg* itself. It is a sort of cake, but its peculiarity is that it is baked on straw, some of the straw always adhering to the bottom. It is made in the form of a true lover's knot, of the less fantastic kind, and a golden sign of this shape hangs outside to determine a baker's shop; even in Petersburg and in the north of Finland a modified representation of the *Wiborgs kringla* also denotes a bakery.

Having partaken of the odds and ends mentioned, the ordinary mid-day meal or dinner begins, usually between two and four o'clock.

The hostess, who sits at the head of the table, with her husband generally on one side and her most honoured guest on the other, with two huge soup-tureens before her, asks those present whether they will have soup or *filbunke*, a very favourite summer dish. This is made from fresh milk which has stood in a tureen till it turns sour and forms a sort of curds, when it is eaten with sugar and powdered ginger. It appears at every meal in the summer, and is excellent on a hot day. It must be made of fresh milk left twenty-four hours in a warm kitchen for the cream to rise, and twenty-four hours in the cellar to cool afterwards. The castor sugar is invariably served in a very tall silver basin—that is to say, the bowl, with its two elegant handles, stands on a well-modelled pillar about 8 or 10 inches high, altogether a very superior and majestic form of sugar basin.

There are two special drinks in Finland—one for the rich, the other for the poor.

Mjöd is one of the most delicious beverages imaginable. It is not champagne, and not cider, but a sort of effervescing drink of pale yellow colour made at the breweries, and extremely refreshing on a hot day. It costs about one shilling and sixpence a bottle, sometimes more, and is often handed round during an afternoon call with the coffee and *marmelader*, the famous Russian sweetmeats made of candied fruits.

The other drink is called in Swedish *Svagdricka*, but as it is really a peasant drink, and as the peasants speak Finnish, it is generally known as *Kalja*, pronounced "Kal-e-yah." It looks black, and is really small beer. Very small indeed it is, too, with a nasty burnt taste, and the natives up-country all make it for themselves, each farm having half a dozen or twenty hop poles of its own, which flavours the *Kalja* for the whole party for a year, so its strength of hop or amount of bubble is not very great.

From the middle of June till the middle of July we ate wild strawberries three times a day with sugar and cream! They simply abound, and very delicious these little *Mansikka* are. So plentiful are they that *Suomi* is actually known as "strawberry land."

There are numbers of wild berries in Finland; indeed, they are quite a speciality, and greet the traveller daily in soup,—sweet soups being very general,—or they are made into delicious syrups, are served as compote with meat, or transformed into puddings.

Here are a few of them—

Finnish.	Latin.	
Mansikka	*Fargaria vesca*	Wild strawberries, found in profusion everywhere.
Mesikka	*Rubus arcticus*	Red, with splendid aroma. Liqueur is made from them.
Vatukka	*Rubus idaeus*	Wild raspberry.
Lakka	*Rubus chamaemorus*	Black. Often made into a kind of black juice, and taken as sweet soup.
Mustikka	*Vaccinium myrtillus*	(Wortleberries) — Black. Often made into soup of a glorious colour.

FINNISH.	LATIN.	
Puolukka . .	*Vaccinium vitis idæa*	(Cranberry)—Eaten with meat.
Juolukka . .	*Vaccinium uliginosum.*	
Herukka . .	*Ribes nigrum.*	
Karpaloja . .	*Vaccinium occycoccus* .	Is a small red berry, something like a cranberry. It grows in the autumn under the snow, where it ripens, and is ready to be picked in spring when the snow melts. It keeps in a tub for months without any preparation, and is particularly good as a jelly when eaten with cream.
Suomuurain .	(Swedish, *Hjörtron*) .	In appearance is like a yellow raspberry; grows in the extreme north in the morasses during August. It is a most delicious fruit, with a pine-tree flavour.
Joulukka . .	...	A common black kind of berry, not very eatable.

"Will you have some sweetbread?" we were once asked, but as we were drinking coffee at the moment we rather wondered why we should be going back to the *entrees*—our stupidity, of course. Sweetbread is the name given to all simple forms of cake in Finland; a great deal of it is eaten, and it is particularly good.

At dinner, hock, claret, or light beer are drunk as a rule; but at breakfast and supper, beer and milk are the usual beverages, the latter appearing in enormous jugs—indeed, we have actually seen a glass one that stood over 2 feet high.

After dinner coffee is immediately served with cream, not hot milk; after supper, tea is generally handed round, the hostess brewing it at the table.

Beside her stands a huge *samovar*, which is really a Russian urn, and not a teapot as generally supposed. Inside it are hot coals or coke, round the tin of which is the boiling water, while above it stands the teapot, kept hot by the

water below. It is generally very good tea, for it comes over from China in blocks through Siberia, but it is much better when drunk with thin slices of lemon than with milk. As a rule, it is served to men in tumblers, and to women in cups, an etiquette with an unknown origin. It is pale-straw colour, and looks horribly weak, and so it is, but with lemon it forms a very refreshing beverage.

At the end of each meal every one at the table goes and shakes hands with the host and hostess and says "*tack*" (thank you); certainly a pretty little courtesy on the part of strangers, but rather monotonous from children, when there are many of them, as there often are in Finland, especially when the little ones cluster round the parents or grandparents as a sort of joke, and prolong the "*tack*" for an indefinite period.

Then the men smoke; seldom the women, for although so close to Russia Finnish women rarely imitate their neighbours in this habit. The elder men smoke tremendously, especially cigarettes, fifty or sixty per diem being nothing uncommon. In fact, this smoking has become so terrible a curse that there is now a movement among the students, most of whom seem to be anti-smokers, against tobacco, so perhaps the new generation may not have such black teeth and yellow fingers.

But to return to the first impressions of our country-house. The balconies are made very wide so as to admit a dining-table, and as the roofs of the houses project a couple of feet beyond the balcony, in order to throw the winter's snows on to the ground instead of allowing them to block up the verandahs, there is plenty of shade; that is occasionally increased by hanging curtains of red and white striped canvas, which can be drawn together, and form quite a little room. They were the jolliest, happiest meals in that island home! Every one spoke German — the language we all knew best in common—and conversation, jokes, and merriment never flagged as we sat facing that glorious view of pine-wood and water, while the lilac (just two months later

than in England) scented the air, or the hawthorn afforded shelter for endless birds who were constantly singing. Among the most notable cries was that of the friendly cuckoo. Fourteen, and even twenty, of us often dined together—the daughters, sons, husbands, wives, and children from the other houses frequently gathering round the father's board. And in the cool of the evening we usually went for a row on the lake.

Every one boats in Finland. Two or three sailing boats, and some dozen rowing skiffs and canvas *kanots* of different sizes, lay upon the Captain's water, and at all times and seasons some person was away in one of them, or down at the bathing house enjoying a so-called sea-bath, although it was not really salt water being more of an inland lake. Canoeing is one of the great sports of Finland, and yet it is only within the last ten years that these *kanots* have come in such universal use, although no country was ever better fitted for the purpose, for it is one series of long lakes joined together by beautiful rivers.

Dr. August Ramsey must be termed the Father of Finnish Canoeing, for it was his book on the subject that made the sport so fashionable. Funnily enough, these Finnish canoes are always made of canvas stretched over ribs of wood. They are $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 feet wide and some 20 feet long; therefore they are pretty solid and can be used with a sail.

An Englishman fond of the sport cannot do better than take a summer jaunt to Finland, and with his canoe travel through some of the most beautiful parts of that captivating country.

Finlanders lead a very jolly, independent, happy life during the summer months. They seem to throw off their cares and responsibilities and to make up their minds to enjoy the long, balmy days, and, as they are not devoured by the midges which eat up strangers alive, they have nought to ruffle the even tenor of their way.

After supper, when the day's work is over, and the great

heat has gone, boating parties are made up, and, in the brilliant midnight sunsets, they glide in and out of the islands, visit distant friends, singing the while some of the delightful melodies for which their land is justly famous.

The great excitement in the homes is the ring of the telephone bell and the Swedish cry, "Hulloa! ring up so and so," which at first we imagined was being translated into English for our benefit. Like Norway, Finland is riddled with telephones, and a delightful luxury they are, for by their means one can live out of the world, and yet be in it. For instance, at *Wiborg* no one knew anything about the steamboats plying between *Sordavala* (six hours by train) and *Valamo*, the famous Russian monastery whither we were bound, but by means of the telephone we acquired all necessary information in a few minutes. Telephones are very cheap, costing about a couple of pounds a year, and they are universal. Perhaps they rather disturb the peace of a household, being in such constant use for every conceivable and inconceivable thing, that it really seems as if it would soon be necessary to have small boys sitting beside them—after the fashion of porters at lodge gates—to attend to the endless messages they convey.

Then perhaps the following contretemps might have been avoided—

Pekka was madly in love with *Ilma*, a wondrously beautiful maid. He heard rumours that she was trifling with another. He could not stand the torture even for a few hours, and so "rang up" the mansion of the family *Heikkilä*.

Joy, he heard the voice of *Ilma* in answer, and said, "Is it you, dear one? I, *Pekka*, am here."

A soft sigh replied.

"Are you glad to hear *Pekka*—do you care for him just a little?".

"Yes," sighed the fair maid.

"Darling, it is not true you care for *Armas Merikanto?*"

"No, no!" she cried.

"You like me—you love me?"

"Yes," she softly murmured.

"Will you be my wife?"

"I will, *Pekka*."

Overjoyed, *Pekka* almost hugged the wooden box that brought him such glad tidings.

"When may I come to see you, darling—my little wife?"

"Come, *Pekka*—come for dinner at three o'clock."

A few more sweet nothings, and, quite enraptured, he returned to his dull office routine. At three o'clock, spick and span, with a golden ring in his pocket, he presented himself at the house of the *Heikkiläs*.

In the salon stood the mother. He went towards her to receive her motherly congratulations. She rushed forward to meet him, as all good mothers-in-law should, and, throwing herself into his arms, she cried—

"Take me, *Pekka*, dearest *Pekka*; I am yours till death."

"Mine?"

"Yes. I have loved you long, darling *Pekka*, and I am ready whenever you can fix a day for our marriage!"

Tableau!

Moral—beware of telephones!

The first thing that strikes a stranger on entering a Finnish country-house is the mats, placed at the foot of every staircase and outside every door. They are made of the loose branches of the pine-tree neatly laid on the top of one another to form an even round mat, these branches being so constantly renewed that they always give off a delicious fresh smell. The next surprise is the enormous white porcelain stove or oven found in every room; so enormous are these *kakelugn* that they reach the ceiling, and are sometimes 4 feet long and 3 or 4 feet deep. The floors of all the rooms are painted raw-sienna colour, and very brightly polished. To our mind it seems a pity not to stain the natural wood instead of thus spoiling its beauty, but yellow paint is at present the fashion, and fashion is always beautiful some folk say. In winter carpets and

rugs are put down, but during summer the rooms are swept daily (at all events in the country) with a broom made of a bundle of fresh, green birch leaves—somewhat primitive, but very efficacious, for when the leaves are a little damp they lick up dust in a wonderful manner. These little brooms are constantly renewed, being literally nothing more than a bundle of birch boughs tied tightly together. They cost nothing in a land where trees grow so fast that it is difficult for a peasant to keep the ground near his house free from their encroachments.

In truth, Finland is utterly charming. Its lakes, its canals, its rivers, its forests, are beautiful, and its customs are interesting. It is primitive and picturesque, and its people are most kind and hospitable, but—and oh! it is a very big *but* indeed, there exists a Finnish pest.

Strolling through those beautiful dark pines and silver birch woods, he is ever by one's side; sailing or rowing over the lakes, that Finnish demon intrudes himself. Sitting quietly at meals, we know the fiend is under the table, while, as we rest on the balcony in the evening, watching a glorious sun sinking to rest an hour before midnight, he whispers in our ears or peeps into our eyes. He is here, there, and everywhere; he is omnipresent—this curse of Finland. He is very small, his colour is such that he is hardly visible, and he is sly and crafty, so that the unwary stranger little guesses that his constant and almost unseen companion will speedily bring havoc to his comfort and dismay into his life. The little wretch is called *Mygga* in Swedish or *Itikainen* in Finnish, the Finnish words being pronounced exactly as they are written, in the German style of calling i, e, etc.

In English he is a mosquito of a very virulent description, and in Finland he is a peculiarly knowing little brute, and shows a hideous partiality for strangers, not apparently caring much for the taste of Finnish blood.

He loves Englishwomen as inordinately as they loathe him, and, personally, the writer suffered such tortures that

her ankles became hot and swollen, and at last, in spite of ammonia and camphor baths, grew so stiff that walking became positively painful, and her ears and eyes mere distorted lumps of inflamed flesh! Therefore, dear lady reader, be prepared when you visit Midgeland to become absolutely hideous and unrecognisable.

Only a week or two before starting on this trip our carriage had just drawn up in Piccadilly opposite the Saville Club, when Sir Edwin Arnold passed, and, crossing the road, said he was off to Moscow the following day for the coronation of the Tzar, and that he had been studying Russian for the occasion, never before having wrestled with that language, in spite of the number he already understood.

"We are going almost the same journey—to Finland—in a week or two," we replied.

"Beware of the mosquitoes," was his answer. "I have never been to Russia, but I once spent a few days in Finland, and my liveliest recollections of the place are the mosquitoes."

He was right; and not merely mosquitoes but—but—that awful experience must be told in another chapter.

As a town *Wiborg* is nothing to boast of. There is nothing very remarkable about any ordinary Finnish town, with the exception of the capital, *Helsingfors*, where all the best buildings are centered and built of stone! Most of the towns are modern and generally ugly, because, being of wood, they are so apt to be burnt down, that architects give neither time nor thought to their structural beauty, or, even when not so destroyed, the original houses —which seldom last over a hundred years—have fallen out of repair and been replaced by undecorative wooden structures. Stone houses are few and far between, and, as a rule, the wooden dwellings are only one storey high, because fires in such low buildings are more easily extinguished, and, land not being of much value, the space required for such edifices can easily be afforded. These wooden dwellings are usually painted dark red in the smaller towns, and

lighter shades in the larger, while here and there on the walls are to be seen iron rosettes and other queer sort of ornaments, really used as a means of keeping the house together. No one, not even a Finn, could call the average native town beautiful, although some excellent stone educational buildings are springing up here and there.

The capital is charmingly situated and has several very nice buildings, and is therefore an exception, but even in the case of *Wiborg* the shop windows are small and uninviting, the streets are shockingly laid with enormous boulder stones and sometimes even bits of rock, while pavements, according to our ideas, hardly exist.

The religion being Lutheran there are no beautiful churches, only simple whitewashed edifices, extremely plain inside, with an organ at one end, an altar and perhaps one picture at the other. In the case of *Kuopio* (which town possesses a Bishop) the cathedral is only lighted by candles, and, during the service, a man goes round continually putting out those that have burnt too low with a wet sponge tied to the end of a stick!

One of the chief characteristics of the towns, most noticeable to a stranger, is that none of the windows are ever open. The Finn dreads fresh air as much as he dreads daily ablutions, and therefore any room a stranger enters at any hour is certain to be stuffy and oppressive.

One day in *Wiborg*, overcome with the intense heat, we went into a confectioner's where ices were provided, to get cool. Imagine our horror to find that the double windows were hermetically sealed, although the café invited the patronage of strangers by placards stating "ices were for sale." What irony! To eat an ice in a hothouse as a means of getting cool.

Wiborg has a big market, and every day a grand trade is done in that large open space, and as we wandered from one cart of meat to another of vegetables or black bread, or peeped at the quaint pottery or marvellous baskets made from shavings of wood neatly plaited, our attention was arrested

by fish tartlets. We paused to look; yes, a sort of pasty the shape of a saucer was adorned in the middle with a number of small fish about the size of sardines. They were made of *suola kala*, a small salted fish, eaten raw by the peasants, which we now saw in *Wiborg* for the first time, though, unhappily, not for the last, since these fish tartlets haunted us at every stage of our journey up country!

CHAPTER III

FINNISH BATHS

No one can be many days in Finland without hearing murmurs of the bath-house.

A Finnish bath once taken by man or woman can never be forgotten!

A real native bath is one of the specialities of the country. Even in the old songs of the *Kalevala* they speak of the "cleansing and healing vapours of the heated bath-room."

Poets have described the bath in verse, artists have drawn it on canvas, and singers have warbled forth its charms; nevertheless, it is not every traveller who has penetrated the strange mystery. Most strange and most mysterious it is! But I anticipate.

Every house in the country, however humble that house may be, boasts its *bastu*, or bath-house, called in Finnish *Sauna*. As we passed along the country roads, noting the hay piled up on a sort of tent erection made of pine trunks, to dry in the sun before being stowed away into small wooden houses for protection during the winter, or nearly drove over one of those strange long-haired pigs, the bristles on whose backs reminded one of a hog-maned polo pony, one saw these *bastus* continually. Among the cluster of little buildings that form the farm, the bath-house, indeed, stands forth alone, and is easily recognisable, one of its walls, against which the stove stands, being usually black, even on the outside, from smoke.

THREE GENERATIONS OF FINNS

Every Saturday, year in, year out, that stove is heated, and the whole family have a bath—not singly, oh dear, no, but altogether, men, women, and children; farmer, wife, brothers, sisters, labourers, friends, and the dogs too, if they have a mind; so that once in each week the entire population of Finland is clean, although few of them know what daily ablutions, even of the most primitive kind, mean, while hot water is almost as difficult to procure in *Suomi*, as a great auk's egg in England!

Naturally any institution so purely national as the Finnish *bastu* was worth investigating—in fact, could not be omitted from our programme. Bathing with the peasants themselves, however, being impossible, we arranged to enjoy the extraordinary pleasure at a friend's house, where we could be washed by one of her own servants; for, be it understood, there is always one servant in every better-class establishment who understands the *bastu*, and can, and does wash the family.

When *she* is washed, we unfortunately omitted to inquire! In towns, such as *Helsingfors*, there are professional women-washers, who go from house to house to bathe and massage men and women alike. Theirs is a regular trade, and as the higher class of the profession receive about a shilling for "attending" each bath given at a private house, the employment is not one to be despised. Neither is it, as proved by the fact that there are over 300 public bathing-women in Finland.

On the eventful night of our initiation, supper was over, the house-party and guests were all assembled on the balcony, the women engaged in needlework, and the men smoking cigarettes, when *Saima*, the Finnish servant, arrived to announce that the English ladies' bath was ready. Taking a fond farewell of the family, we marched solemnly behind the flaxen-haired *Saima*, who had thoroughly entered into the spirit of the joke of giving an English lady a Finnish bath, neither the bather nor attendant being able to understand one word of what the other spoke. Down an avenue

overshadowed by trees we proceeded, getting a peep of a perfectly glorious sunset which bathed one side of the lake in yellow hues, while the other was lighted by an enormous blood-red moon, for in those Northern climes many strange natural effects occur, we little wot of in England. It was a wonderful evening, and we paused to consider which was the more beautiful, the departing day or the coming night.

Saima would brook no delay however, so we had to hurry on. Immediately before us was the *bastu*—a wee wooden house like a small Swiss châlet, the outer room, where we undressed, containing a large oven. The inner room boasted only one small window, through which the departing day did not shine very brilliantly, luckily for our modesty. Its furniture was only a large-sized tin bath filled with cold water, opposite to which were seven very wide wooden steps like a staircase, the top step forming a kind of platform where there was just room to sit without one's head touching the tarred ceiling above. The steps and the platform were covered with straw—Finnish fashion—for the great occasion.

We wondered what next, but we had not much time for speculation, for *Saima*—who only took off her outer dress—grasped us by the hand, her face aglow with the intense heat, led us up the wooden staircase, and signed her will that we should sit on the straw-strewn platform afore honourably mentioned!

Oh, the heat! Many of us know Turkish baths; but then we take them gradually, whereas in the *bastu* one plunges into volcanic fires at once. Blinking in the dim light, we found that beside us was a brick-built stove, for which the fire, as we had noticed while disrobing, is in the outer chamber, and when the washing-woman threw a pail of water upon the surface of the great heated stones, placed for the purpose inside the stove, the steam ascended in volumes, and the temperature went up, until we exclaimed, in one of the few Swedish sentences we knew, "*Mycket hett*" (very hot), at which agonised remark *Saima* laughed up-

roariously, and, nodding and smiling, fetched another pail of water from the cold bath, and threw its contents on the brick furnace in order that more steaming fumes might ascend. Almost stifled we blinked, and gasped, and groaned by turns, we repeated again and again, "*Mycket hett*," "*alltför hett*" (too hot), "*Tack så mycket*" (thank you), in tones of anguish. Much amused, *Saima*—who, be it understood, was a Swedish-speaking Finn—stood smiling cheerfully at our discomfiture; but, happily, at last she seemed to think we might have had enough, for, after waving our hands hopelessly to the accompaniment of "*Nej tack, nej tack*" (no thank you), she apparently understood and desisted.

A moment later, through the steam, we saw her smiling face ascending the stairs, with a pail of hot water in one hand, and a lump of soft soap in the other, on which was a large bundle of white fibre, something like hemp. Dipping this in the pail, she soon made a lather with the soap, and, taking up limb after limb, scrubbed us hard and long—scrubbed until our skin tingled, and in the damp mysterious heat we began to wonder how much of our bodies would emerge from the ordeal. This scrubbing was a long process, and if the Finns wash one another as industriously as *Saima* washed us, no one in Finland should ever be dirty, although most of them must lose several skins a year. Pails of water were then thrown over us, over the straw, over everything, and we heard the soapy water gurgling away into the lake below, which was covered with yellow and white water-lilies. Lilies cannot object to soap, or they would never bloom in Finland as they do!

"*Mycket bra*" (very good), we called again and again, hoping our appreciation might perhaps make *Saima* desist, as our exclamations at the heat did not seem to alarm her. More water was thrown on to the steaming bricks, and *Saima* retired, returning immediately with a great bundle of birch leaves, tied up with a string, such as we had often seen her on former occasions sweeping the floors with. Dipping the branches of the birch into a pail of hot water she proceeded

to beat us all over! She laughed, and we laughed; but the more we laughed the harder she thumped, till the sharp edges of the leaves left almost a sting, while the strong healthy *Saima* beat us harder and harder, dipping the leaves into hot water continually.

The peasantry in Finland are occasionally good enough to wash one another, and stories are told of a dozen of them sitting in rows on the wooden steps, each man vigorously beating his neighbour with birch boughs.

At harvest time, when the heat is very great, and the work very hard, labourers have a bath *every night!* Frequently, after our wonderful experience at *Ilkeäsaari*, we saw, while journeying farther into the country, shoals of human beings strolling off to enjoy their *bastu* or *Sauna.*

It was an awful experience! We were really beginning to feel the heat dreadful by this time, and were confident the blood must be galloping through our veins. Finally the good-tempered Finnish maid appeared to be of our mind, for she fetched a pail of cold water, and, pouring a good drop on our heads—which made us jump—she dipped her birch branches therein and switched them over us. Had we followed true Finnish fashion we should then have plunged straight into the lake outside,—or in winter taken a roll in the snow,—but, our bath being rather more aristocratic, we only descended the slippery steps and jumped into that bath of cold water previously mentioned, before—clad only in burning hot towels—returning to the outer room to dress.

We puffed and panted, and, quite exhausted, longed for a Turkish divan and quiet rest before, robed in fur coats and thick under-garments, we trotted home to bed.

Our bath was taken, the mystery unravelled; we had been washed according to native ideas and customs, and understood what the whole thing meant.

Whether it was the heat, or exhaustion, or the loss of one skin or many, we know not; but after a glass of *mjöd*, that most delicious and refreshing of Finnish drinks, we

slept splendidly, and felt fit next morning for any amount of hard work, even for a journey to Russia through Finland, though we did not speak or understand the language of either country.

The Finnish peasant thinks nothing of being seen by his friends or his neighbours in a state of nature, *apropos* of which peculiarity a well-known general told us the following story—

He had been inspecting a district, and for his benefit parades, etc., were held. Some hours afterwards he went for a ride, and on returning to the village he passed a *Sauna*, where the folk were enjoying their primitive kind of Turkish bath. According to the usual custom one of the men came out to dress himself; but, having left his clothes in a little pile some 20 feet from the *Sauna* door, he had hardly looked out his things when he noticed that the general was upon him. Though not in the least confused by the fact of his nakedness, for which he made no apology, he nevertheless exclaimed in tones of horror, "The general! the general!" and began rummaging among the articles on the ground, till at last he pulled forth a wig, which, all in a hurry, he clapped on his head wrong side up, then standing proudly erect he saluted the general as he passed!

The poor fellow evidently considered his wig of much more importance than his shirt.

Another amusing story is told of an elegant Englishman who had heard so much of Finnish baths that he determined to try one; having arrived at some small town, he told the *Isvoschtschik* to go to the *bastu*. Away they drove, and finally drew up at a very nice house, where he paid the twopence halfpenny fare for his cab, rang the bell, and was admitted by a woman servant. He only knew half a dozen words in Swedish, but repeated *bastu* to the smiling lass, being surprised at the elegance of the furniture in the room into which he had been shown. The girl smiled again and left him. However, thinking it was all right, he proceeded to undress, and, having entirely disrobed, he stood ready to

be escorted into the bath, and accordingly rang for the woman to come and wash and massage him. A few moments later the door opened, and a very beautiful young dame stood before him. She was no masseuse, but the wife of the pastor, into whose house he had come by mistake owing to his want of knowledge of the pronunciation of the language. Tableau!

We had many curious experiences when bathing in the lakes, and seemed to excite as much interest in the peasantry of Finland as a Chinaman with his pigtail would in a small country village in England. At *Sordavala*, for instance, there was a charming little bath-house belonging to our host, for which we got the key and prepared to enjoy ourselves. A bathing-dress was not to be bought for love or money. No one had ever heard of such a thing, but my sister's modesty forbade her appearing without one so near a town, and, now that we had left our kind hostess at *Ilkeäsaari*, she could no longer borrow one. Through the town of *Sordavala*, therefore, we marched from shop to shop until we lighted upon a sort of store where linen goods were procurable. Blue and white-striped galatea exactly suited the purpose, as it would be light for packing, and the colour could not run. We bought it, we paid for it, and home we marched. In less than an hour that gown was cut out by the aid of a pair of nail scissors, without any kind or sort of pattern whatever, and was sewn up ready for use. Out my sister went to bathe, triumphant; but so rare was a bathing-dress that the onlookers thought the English lady had fallen into the water by mischance with all her clothes on.

My sister had hardly taken a plunge from the spring-board into the water below, before every man, woman, and child in the neighbourhood began exclaiming one to the other, "The English lady has tumbled in," and, absolutely, before the bather's head could appear again from the depths of the water they had all run to the bank to have a look at the phenomenon. Of course their interest

was heightened by the appearance of a proper dress and cap, for even the better-class Finlanders very rarely wear any covering on their bodies while bathing, and as the women never dive or swim under water a cap is not necessary to keep their hair dry. They evidently considered my sister and her attire something remarkably funny.

Again at *Iisalmi*, another place of some importance, when we went down to the bath-house we found it surrounded by dozens of boys of all ages and descriptions, who were enjoying themselves gamboling in the water.

A Finnish gentleman of the town, to whom we had an introduction, kindly came with us to unlock the door and see that everything was satisfactory, and he quickly explained to the boys they must go away into the next cove as strange ladies were about to bathe. Very reluctantly they went; and, wishing us good-bye and a pleasant dip, he went too.

We undressed, donned our aquatic attire, plunged into the water, to discover, in a few moments, a row of grinning spectators, varying in age from three years old to thirty, sitting up on the banks like monkeys in a cage, thoroughly enjoying the joke. They laughed and they chatted, they pointed, they waved their arms, and they evidently considered our performances very extraordinary.

These are only two instances out of many, for everywhere we went we caused interest and some amusement.

One of our party through Northern Finland was a magnificent swimmer. He had a cheery way of jumping into a boat, rowing himself far out into the lake, and then taking a header which excited the admiration of all beholders.

At *Kuopio* he did this as was his usual habit, while the old women of the bath-house watched his performance from the shore. One minute went by, and he did not reappear; two minutes went by, and they still did not see his head. "He is drowned, he is drowned," they shrieked in despair, and great was the hubbub and dismay which ensued before he came up again smiling some distance from the spot where

he had originally plunged from the boat. Besides being a strong swimmer, he was a remarkable diver, and if two minutes and a half be the length of time a human-being can breathe under water, then we can safely say two minutes and a half was the length of time he always stayed, for in every town we halted he invariably caused consternation in the heart of some one, who thought the stranger in their midst had gone to a watery grave. He preferred the boat for the sake of his dive, but, as a rule, every one in Finland bathes in the bath-houses, where there are little rooms for undressing, in front of which a big stretch of the lake is walled in as a swimming bath. A penny is the usual charge, and an extra penny for the towel.

Although every Finlander bathes, as, indeed, they must do during their hot summers, every Finlander does not swim, and it is a remarkable thing that among the women, who go daily—sometimes twice a day—to the swimming bath, most of them will sit on the steps or haul themselves round by means of a rope, and never learn how to keep themselves afloat without artificial help.

Walking through the park at *Kuopio* one day with the Baroness Michaeloff, my attention was arrested by the extraordinary number of ant hills we passed.

"They are used for baths," she explained.

"For what?" I asked, thinking I could not have heard aright.

"For baths," she repeated; "formerly these *muurahainen* (ant-heap baths) were quite commonly employed as a cure for rheumatism and many other ailments; but now I fancy it is only the peasants who take them, or very old folk, perhaps."

"Can an ant bath be had here?"

"Certainly. But surely you don't think of taking one?"

"Indeed I do, though. I am trying all the baths of Finland, and an ant-heap bath must not be omitted, if it is possible to have such a thing."

The kindly lady laughed heartily as she said, "Mais,

Madame, est-ce que possible que vous vouliez prendre un de ces bains?"

"Certainment, cela me fait plaisir," I replied, and accordingly we then and there marched off to the bath-house to see how my desire might best be accomplished.

The whole matter did not take long to arrange. Next day, at ten o'clock, the *muurahainen* bath was to be ready, and, in spite of all the chaff round the governor's dinner-table that night about my queer experiment, nothing daunted I presented myself at the appointed hour. The head *Fröken*, who luckily spoke German, explained that my bath was ready.

Into a dear little room I went, and lo, the hot water in the bath was brown! while, floating on the surface, I saw a small linen sack, shaped like a pillow-case, securely tied at the end. The cushion contained the ant-heap, on which boiling water had been poured, so that the animals were really dead, the colour of the water having come from their bodies.

Did I shiver at the thought? Well, a little, perhaps; nevertheless, I tumbled into the warm water, and was scrubbed Finnish fashion by the old bath-woman, with her scrubbing brush, her soft soap, her birch branches, and, afterwards, her massage, the *Fröken* sitting all the while on the sofa, chatting affably, and describing how the peasants omitted the sacks and simply threw the ant-heap *au naturel* into the bath.

The small room had two doors—one opening into the passage, and one into the douche-chamber, which also served for another bathroom. Presently the first of the doors opened, and a girl, without apology, entered and took away a sponge. Did this intrusion make me feel shy? Well, why! one gets over shyness after being washed like a baby once or twice; but she had hardly disappeared before the other door opened, giving admission to a second woman, who came in and deposited a towel; a moment later some one else appeared, and after a good stare departed; then came a

fourth on some pretext or other, and I was beginning to think of the queer stories told of Japan, where the whole paper wall slides back, and the natives enjoy the spectacle of English folk bathing, when yet a fifth came into the room. This was too much, and I asked the *Fröken* why they had all forgotten so many things.

She laughed merrily.

"I'm afraid it's curiosity to see an English lady having an ant-heap bath, so please don't be angry," and she laughed again.

A spectacle, verily! But who could be angry with such innocent people? I had come to try a strange Finnish bath which interested me—why should they not come to see a queer Englishwoman if it amused them? Flinging shyness to the winds, therefore, I smiled and grinned at the next woman who entered as though I liked being on view, and she went away happy.

What was a *muurahainen* like? Candidly, it resembled any other ordinary warm bath, only the water was very black, and there was a strange aromatic odour about it; but there was nothing horrible in the experience, although I had a good douche—three kinds of good douches in fact—for the sake of peace of mind afterwards.

A douche is very delightful, especially on a hot day, and the bath-woman was particularly anxious that we should try the various kinds arranged from the floor, the ceiling, and the walls of the room.

"But," we explained to the lady, with a good deal of patting and gesticulation, "long hair cannot be wet every day, even in the summer time, and to have a shower-bath, as she did not possess a cap, was impossible."

She looked distressed, but she was not going to be beaten, and beckoning for us to wait, she departed, returning a few minutes afterwards with a small white china basin; this she put on her head upside down, to show us that it would serve the purpose of a cap, and holding the rim with both hands she moved it round and round, in a way which

indicated that wherever the water of a shower-bath was falling most was the side to move the basin to.

It was an original idea this shower-bath trick, and it answered very well, but then baths in Finland are an art, and Finland without its bath-houses would not be Finland at all.

The reason that the *muurahainen* bath is efficacious for rheumatism and of strengthening property is due to the amount of formic acid the ants contain. Added to which, these industrious little animals live upon the pine needles, and therefore suck all the strength from the most juicy part of the turpentiny pine, and, as we all know, turpentine is much employed in all kinds of embrocation used for rheumatism, lumbago, sprains, etc.

The next strange bath we experienced was in a waterfall, and was yet more remarkable. Yes, in a real waterfall where a tremendous volume of water dashed down about 10 feet! It was at *Kajana*, a town lying on a stretch of the famous *Uleå* rapids. The real fall is about 40 feet, over which not even the tar-boats—described in a later chapter—dare venture; consequently, two locks, each containing 20 feet of water, have been made for their use. No one could swim, even in the calmer waters above or below the locks, because of the cataracts, so a bath-house has been erected beside the fall, to which the water is brought, by means of a wooden trough, to a sort of small chamber, where it rushes in. That waterfall bath was a most alarming place. It was almost dark as we entered the little chamber through which the water passed.

How shall we describe it? It was a small room about 8 or 10 feet square, with a wooden floor and walls. The top of the wall facing us did not join the roof by about a foot, so as to enable the water to rush in, and the bottom of the wall behind us did not reach the floor by another foot, so as to allow the water to rush out. Some half-dozen stairs descended from the platform on which we stood to the floor below, but as the only light came

in where the falling water was always dripping, the walls were soaking wet, and therefore quite black. It was dull and mystic to say the least of it. Once the full force of the water was turned on by the large wooden arm, it poured in with such tremendous force from about 10 feet above, that in a moment the floor below was a bubbling, seething, frothing pool, and as we descended the steps into this bath, now some 2 or 3 feet deep, the force of the stream was so great that we had actually to hold on by the rail of the stairs to keep our feet at all on the slippery floor below. It was a lovely sensation. A piece of bacon bubbling about in the fat of the frying-pan must experience something like the same movement as we did, bobbing up and down in this rapidly flowing stream. It almost bumped us over, it lifted us off our feet, and yet, as the water swirled round us, the feeling was delicious, and its very coldness was most enjoyable after the heat outside, and the dust we had travelled through.

As we grew courageous and accustomed to the darkness, we walked more under the fall itself, but the water, simply thumping on our back and shoulders, came with such force, that we felt exactly as if we were being well pummelled with a pair of boxing-gloves, or being violently massaged, a delicious tingling sensation being the result. It washed our hair and rinsed it in a way it had never been rinsed before; but the force of the water was so large that it was impossible to keep our whole head under the fall for more than a second at a time, as it almost stunned us. The volume was so great that it would have rendered us insensible very quickly. We women all emerged from the waterfall-bath like drowned rats; or, to put it more poetically, like mermaids, feeling splendidly refreshed, and wider awake than we had probably ever felt in our lives before. The magnitude and force of that waterfall-bath makes me gasp even now to remember. It requires a stout heart to stand underneath it; nevertheless, how delicious the experience to the travel-stained and weary traveller, who had been

suffering from tropical sun, and driving for days along dusty roads in carts.

We had all taken the opportunity of washing our powdered hair, the accumulation of many days dust, back to its natural colour, and, as we all possessed locks which fell considerably below our waists, they would not dry in five minutes, therefore, each with a towel over her shoulders, we came up on to the little pier, hat in hand, and our hair hanging down our backs. It certainly was somewhat primitive to sit all in a row, with our backs to the sun, on the fashionable promenade or pier of the town. But the town was not very big, and the fashion was not very great, and we gradually screwed up our courage, and finally walked home through the streets in the same way, carrying our hats, with towels over our shoulders for cloaks. That was all very well, but when we reached the small hotel the dinner was already on the table, for we had dallied so long over our bath that our gentlemen were impatiently waiting for our advent, and persuaded us not to stop to dress our hair as they were starving, so down we sat, just as we were, to partake of the meal.

But one hardly ever does anything uncommon or a little out of the ordinances of society, in this world, without being sorry for it afterwards, and having put off struggling with knots, tangled plaits, and hair-pins, until after dinner, we were horrified when the door opened and three unknown men marched in to join our meal. There was no escape; we were caught like rats in cages. What on earth they thought of strange women sitting in towels, and with dishevelled locks, we dare not think! Imagine our confusion.

One was a lieutenant in the army; he was young and shy, and his discomfiture at the scene was even greater than our own. The second proved to be a delightful man; a young engineer who was employed in planning the route for the new railway to *Kajana*. He told us that he had been for over a month travelling through the forests and bogs of

the country, surveying for the best route for the projected line, and that the wooden staves we had noticed so often along the road, as we drove from *Kuopio*, were the marks laid down as the most suitable direction for the railway to take.

He had heard of us, for some peasants had told him, with great excitement, that morning that a party of people were driving through *Savolax*, and some of them were English. Poor man, he told us of his sufferings in the bogs, and how in some of the low-lying districts the mosquitoes had tormented him so awfully that he had been quite ill. Even Finlanders suffer sometimes, it would seem; therefore strangers need not complain.

In spite of our dishevelled locks, we after all enjoyed a very pleasant meal.

CHAPTER IV

A NIGHT IN A MONASTERY

HAVING torn ourselves away from our kind friends at *Ilkeäsaari* for a time, and digressed from our story to describe Finnish baths, we must now own that the prospect of a night in a monastery was very exciting—more especially when that monastery chanced to belong to Russia, and to stand alone on an island in the middle of the great *Lodoga* Lake, which no doubt once joined together the White Sea and the Gulf of Finland. It is the largest lake in Europe, and celebrated also for the cold temperature of its water, which always is more or less frozen over in winter. It never warms in summer, and therefore there can be little or no bathing around its shores.

Sordavala, where we embarked—of which more anon—is Finnish, staunch Finnish, while *Valamo*, where we landed, is a Russian monastery; therefore no love exists between the two centres, and few arrangements are made for the comfort and transport of strangers, with the result that a couple of steamers go and come as they like; no one knowing when they went, and much less when they would return. Nevertheless, on one eventful Sunday morning, the longest day of the whole year, we were hoisted on board the *Baallam* (the V, true Russian fashion, had turned into a B) from our little boat below, and seated ourselves comfortably on the vessel which belongs to the famous monastery. Though we had been in many ships, manned with many types of sailors, from the swarthy Moor to the short sturdy

Icelander, the agile Italian to the fearless Norseman, we here encountered a class of sailor we had never seen before.

He was tall and lank and lean; he wore a sort of long gown of black cloth, green on the shoulders with age, and frayed at the elbows, while a girdle of plaited wool encircled his waist. He had no collar or cuffs, but his feet were encased in long sea-boots, which peeped out from under his petticoats, and his hair — well, his hair hung over his shoulders almost to his waist, and on his head was placed a high round black-cloth cap. He was like no class or form of sailor we had ever seen before. He was something weird and uncanny. His face was neither bronzed by the sea nor tanned by the sun, but had an unhealthy pallor about it, and his sunken eyes looked wistfully over a world of which he seemingly knew nothing. Yet he was a sailor, this antithesis of a Jack Tar, and he was also — a Russian monk! His hands were none of the cleanest, his clothes none of the sweetest; but it was not salt water that made them so — it was oil and age.

We were well armed with an introduction to the *Igumen* or head of the monastery, the sort of cardinal or bishop of the island. And we were also provided with a large basket of provisions, since no one can get anything at *Valamo* except such food as the monks eat and cook themselves, not but that their food is generally good enough as simple fare goes; but at the precise time of our visit there happened to be a great fast in the Greek Church, during which it is impossible to secure even milk and butter, the monks being forbidden such luxuries. The only things obtainable were black bread, soup made from cabbage, groats, a sort of buck-wheat porridge cooked in oil, and small beer or tea. On such diet or on potato soup, the 70 monks and 400 probationers live for *six weeks* in the height of summer, as well as at Easter and other festivals. Oil is used profusely in cooking at such periods as a sort of penance. At other seasons milk and butter are allowed, fish is

eaten on Sundays, etc., and more farinaceous and vegetable foods enjoyed, although strong beer, wine, and meat are never touched.

Knowing the difficulty of getting food of any kind during one of these strict fasts, we asked a friend to be sure and order for us a good basket of eatables, and, among other things, a fowl.

It may be well to mention that Frau von Lilly accompanied us on our trip to *Sordavala*, *Valamo*, and *Imatra*, acting as guide, cicerone, and friend. Being an excellent linguist, and well versed in the manners and customs of her country, her aid was invaluable; indeed, it is to her we owe much of the success of our summer jaunt to Finland.

At *Sordavala*, however, we were joined for a few days by a young Finlander, whose name is a household word in *Suomi*, and who, though still youthful, having inherited the wisdom of his ancestors, proved such an excellent courier, organiser, and companion, that in joke we christened him Grandpapa, finding his wisdom far beyond his years.

Poor Grandpapa! how we teased him, how we imposed upon his good nature; but through it all he emerged victorious, and has the gratification of knowing he finally escorted two Englishwomen through some of the wild untrodden paths of his native land, and shipped them for home, alive and well, and none the worse for strange experiences — experiences not unmixed at times with a spice of danger.

Such were our travelling companions, joined later by Grandpapa's handsome sisters, and a very delightful student, whose father is one of the best-known men in Finland; to say nothing of a young baron, a magister, and a General, who accompanied us for a day or two at different points along our route, and then left us again, to attend other calls of duty.

To Grandpapa was entrusted the ordering of a fowl for *Valamo*.

"A whole fowl?" he asked.

"Certainly. Surely you would not provide half a fowl for three people, would you?"

"No. But I might provide three fowls for one person, which would be more suitable."

We smiled a sickly smile, at what we supposed to be an attempt at Finnish humour too profound for our weak intellects to grasp, or perhaps our smile veiled the hidden sarcasm we felt within at such poor fun.

Grandpapa forgot the fowl; but in his sleep he suddenly awoke from a dreadful nightmare, during the horrors of which that cackling creature glared upon him in the enormity of his sin. Next morning he was up before the chickens' elderly friends, the cocks, began to crow, and ere they had completed their morning song, well—the stock of the farmyard was lessened.

Before we steamed away from the little pier, the basket of eatables arrived, and we went off happy in the possession of a fowl, sardines, cold eggs, tea, white bread and butter, a large bottle of milk, to say nothing of a small cellar of birch-bark plaitings containing Lager beer and soda water. All this, as written down, may seem a too goodly supply, but be it remembered we were three healthy women who had to be provisioned for thirty-six hours; Grandpapa did not come with us to the monastery.

Two hours' steam over the northern portion of that enormous lake brought forty islands, which form a group called *Valamo*, in sight, with the great white and blue-domed Russian church standing out clearly against a lovely sky. This high and clean new building was only begun four years ago, and it is now finished. The monks built nearly all of it themselves, made the bricks, carved the wood, painted the walls, ceilings, etc., and did all the goldsmith's work for lamps and altars. It is very massive, very great, catholic in its gaudy style, but sadly wanting tone. Much may, however, be accomplished by the kindly hand of time, which often renders the crudest things artistic, as it gently heals the wounds of grief.

We were struck by the size of the place; close beside the monastery and large church was a huge building, a sort of hotel for visitors, containing 2000 beds! They are small rooms and small beds, 'tis true, but at times of great pilgrimages and festivals they are quite full. No one pays; hospitality, such as it is, is free; the visitor merely gives what he likes to the church on leaving. But the monks, who dispense hospitality gratis, do a roaring trade in photographs and rosaries, and are very pressing to sell them to strangers, not that they need be, as the monastery is noted for its riches. It certainly does not display any sign of wealth on the backs of its inhabitants, for some of their long coats looked green and yellow with age, and we were not surprised at their shabby appearance when we learned that they each only had one coat a year in which to do all their work, no matter how dirty that work might be. Are they not there to mortify the flesh and learn economy? What is the want of raiment when compared with the wants of the soul?

They are given triennially an enormous thick fur coat, cap, and gloves, so their wardrobes are not large, and some of the men seem to take little interest in keeping even their few garments clean or tidy.

Beyond this hostelry with its 2000 beds, which was built by the monks to house their better-class visitors, is yet another large building for the use of the poorer pilgrims, who sometimes come in hundreds at a time to do penance at this famous monastery. Besides the two vast barracks for strangers, are stables for eighty horses, a shed for sixty cows, large gardens, piers, storehouses, etc., so that *Valamo* is really a huge colony, a little world, not entirely inhabited by men, however, for many of the pilgrims are women, while several of the scrubbers and cleaners in the hostleries are old wives.

Leaving the boat we walked up a hill, and then up some wide steps, behind the white stone copings of which purple and white lilac nodded and scented the air. This

staircase was more like one in the famous Borghesa Gardens at Rome than anything we could have expected to meet with in the north-east of Europe, nestling close by the side of Siberia. Passing under an archway we found ourselves in a huge courtyard; just opposite to where we stood was the refectory. On the right the church, or rather two churches, for the one is really built over the other, appeared looking very imposing. All around the quadrangle were the cells. Each monk had one for himself, as well as a novice to attend on him; such are his privileges; in the other cells two novices are housed together, and have to take it in turns to keep their small and comfortless abode clean and tidy.

It was a wondrous sight that met our view. The mid-day meal was just over when we arrived, 470 men were streaming out of the dining-hall. How strange they looked, each man clothed in a long black robe like a catholic priest, and each wearing his beard unshaven and his hair long, for, in imitation of our Lord, they let their hair grow to any length, never touching it with steel; the locks of some few fell almost to their waist, but, as a rule, a man's hair does not seem to grow longer than his shoulders, although cases have been known where it has reached the knee! Strange to say, at *Valamo* most of the monks wore curls, and a lovely sort of auburn seemed the prevailing colour of their hair. If they had only kept it nicely, the wavy locks and pretty warm colour would have been charming, but in most instances it was dirty and unkempt. Their faces and hands were as dirty as their coats, and altogether the idea that cleanliness is next to godliness seemed to be totally wanting in that island; still there were exceptions, and two of them luckily fell to our lot.

We stood on the steps of the church transfixed. It seemed such a strange scene. It was no religious ceremony, merely the return of the monks and novices from their mid-day meal in the refectory, but yet the spectacle was fascinating.

PROCESSION OF MONKS, VALAMO

Out of the door came the great *Igumen;* his face was kindly, and his locks hung over his shoulders. His cloth hat almost covered his eyes, and his long black veil fell behind him like a train. A crucifix and a cross lay upon his breast, and he walked with the stately tread of a Pope. He was followed by his monks clad in the same high straight cloth hats—like top hats in shape but minus the brim—from which also fell black-cloth veils. When in church long-trained skirts are added by the monks, who remained covered during most of the service; every one else uncovering.

On walked the *Igumen* with lordly mien, monks, novices, and pilgrims bowing and crouching before him, some of them kneeling and touching the ground with their foreheads many times, others kissing his hands, or even the hems of his garments. Each and all were pleading for some holy privilege.

The lower grades followed the priests respectfully. Novices of the monastery kissed the ordinary monks' hands, for the latter of course are holy and worthy of much reverence, or the monks and novices fell upon one another's necks as they did in the old Bible days. We thought at first they were kissing, but we soon saw their lips merely touched first one shoulder and then another, a very usual salutation in the monastery. Such obeisance from man to man was wonderful, and the overpowering delight in the faces of the pilgrims very striking, as they accomplished the deeds of reverence they had come so many hundreds of miles shoeless to perform. Sometimes as many as 3000 pilgrims arrive in one day.

To the great *Igumen,* as he neared his door, we gave our letter of introduction; he quickly glanced at it, then, turning to a very handsome young novice standing near, spoke a few words and, with a wave of his hand, a sweet smile and distant bow, passed on.

Forward came the young man. He was about six feet high, thin and lithesome, very cleanly and gentlemanly in

appearance, with the most beautiful face imaginable, the sort of spiritual countenance one finds in the old masters when they strove to represent St. John, and his soft auburn hair fell on his shoulders with a round curl at the end. He was a type of a beautiful boy, twenty years of age perhaps.

Doffing his black cloth cap, he said—

"Vielleicht die damen sprechen Deutch?" (Perhaps the ladies talk German?)

"Gewiss" (certainly) we answered, only too delighted to be addressed in a language we knew amongst those Russian-speaking folk.

Then he continued, "If you allow me I will show you our homes. The *Igumen* has put me entirely at your disposal."

He spoke so charmingly and so fluently, we could not refrain from asking him where he had learnt to speak such excellent German.

"My father is German," he replied, "but my mother is Russian, and, therefore, I must belong to the Orthodox Church." Of course, it is a known fact that if either parent belong to the Greek Church all the children must belong to that church, and once Greek always Greek.

He seemed to have a sad look in his eyes as he said this, and we asked if he liked being in the monastery. "Of course. Certainly. It is quite of my own free will."

He laid great emphasis on *my own free will*, but, somehow, there was a ring in his voice that made us feel there was more force than truth in the assertion, and, being urged by curiosity, we led the conversation back to the same theme later in the day.

He took us to the guest's apartment first. We passed under a large archway, where, bidding us wait a moment, he ran on to a couple of priests who were sitting like sentinels at either side of a staircase, and, after some parley with them, returned and explained he had arranged for us to have room No. 25.

We discovered subsequently that all the women's rooms

were on the first floor, and those of all the men on the second; husbands and wives invariably being separated.

Our guide courteously asked us to follow him, and, accordingly, down a long and somewhat dark corridor we wandered to No. 25. The walls of the gallery were plainly whitewashed, and ornamented only by an occasional small picture of a saint, before which most passers-by paused and crossed themselves.

No. 25 proved to be but a tiny room, a sort of long cupboard, containing three little wooden beds, two chairs, and one stool, which latter served as a wash-hand stand; there was besides a small table in the window, and positively nothing else! It could not have been more sparsely furnished, and it could not have been smaller, for there was only enough space to pass up and down between the beds. It savoured of a ship's cabin, yet it was the honoured guest-chamber of a monastery where hospitality coupled with strict simplicity reigned.

Ere leaving us with the most gracious of bows, our new friend explained he would return anon.

At once we unpacked our small bundle, and arranged our luncheon basket, so that on our return, in an hour's time, after visiting the gardens, for which our novice had gone to fetch the key, we might have something to eat.

When we re-entered our tiny chamber for that festive meal, we asked Brother Sebastian, who had meantime charmed us by his gracious kindly ways, if he would join us.

He looked sadly and wistfully at the viands, ere he answered, "No, thank you, Gnädige Frau—I must not."

There really seemed no harm in feeding the poor ill-nourished monk, so, spite of the refusal, we begged him out of sheer humanity to change his mind, and have some of our precious chicken.

"I ought not to eat with strangers," he replied. "A little tea and bread, however, I will take, if you please; such small luxuries are allowed in fasting time, but I

must not have any sardines or fowl, or cheese, or butter, or milk, thank you," he continued, as we handed each in turn.

It seemed as though we had been reckoning without our host. Where, oh! where, was the much-discussed chicken? Each parcel we opened proved to be something else, and we looked from one to the other amazed. Grandpapa was not there to ask, but Grandpapa had told us the story of his dream, a mere phantasy of crowing chanticleers, and we began to fear he had never ordered that chicken at all!

We were really getting more than anxious when the last parcel—a very small one—lay in its white paper at the bottom of that basket.

Even Brother Sebastian began to share our anxiety and sorrow, as he consolingly told us no meat, fish, or fowl was to be procured for love or money on the Island. Slowly and sadly we undid that little parcel, and lo! happily sitting on the white paper were three small pigeons.

"No chicken, but small pigeons," we exclaimed—"how ridiculous; why, they are so tiny there is nothing on them."

Yet it turned out the creatures were not pigeons but the typical fowls eaten in Finland during the month of July. Almost as soon as the baby chicken has learnt to walk about alone, and long before he is the possessor of real feathers, his owner marks him for slaughter; he is killed and eaten. Very extravagant, but very delicious. A Hamburger fowl is good and tender, but he is nothing to be compared with the succulent Finlander, whose wishing-bone is not one inch long.

Having devoured a whole fowl for my dinner, I brought away the small bone as a memento of a ravenous appetite —unappeased by an entire spring chicken!

Brother Sebastian smiled at the incident, and we tried to persuade him to change his mind and join us; he looked longingly at the modest dainties which seemed to bring back recollections of the days when he lived in the world, and enjoyed the pleasures thereof, but he only said—

"Besten dank, Meine Dame, but my conscience will not let me eat such luxuries. I cannot take more than the Church allows in fast times—the tea and bread is amply sufficient, for this is white bread, and that is a delicacy I have not tasted for years; all ours is black and sour. I should like to eat a sardine, but my conscience would kill me afterwards, you see."

As we did not wish to kill the unsophisticated youth, we pressed him no further.

What a picture we made, we four, in a far-away chamber of the *Valamo* Monastery with that beautiful boy sitting on the queer coverleted couch.

He told us that three years previously he had "made a fault." We did not ask of what nature, and he did not say; he only stated that his mother, who was the daughter of a high official in the Russian Army, had, on the advice of her priest, sent him here to repent.

"Was it not very strange at first?"

"Yes, for you see we live in Moscow, and my father knows every one, and there are many grand people always at our house. It seemed difficult to me because most of the inmates here are peasants, and once within the monastery walls we are all equal; we are all men, and God's servants. Rank counts as nothing, for no one knows our names except the *Igumen* himself. When we enter we give up our garments, our money, our identity, and clothe ourselves as servants of the Church until we leave again, or take the vows of monks and give up the world for ever."

"How do you become monks?" we inquired, interested.

"We cannot do so till we are thirty years of age—we are novices at first, and free to go away, but at thirty we can decide to take the vows, give up all we possess, and dedicate our lives to the Church, if we desire to do so. Then our name is struck off the police rolls."

"You are lost in fact?"

"Yes, lost to the world, for although while novices we can get away occasionally for a time on very important

business, once we become monks it is hardly possible to obtain leave of absence. A monk," he continued proudly, "wears a tall hat, has a room to himself, is waited upon by a probationer, sits at the upper table, and leads a much easier life as regards all kinds of work."

He had spoken such splendid German, this fine young fellow with the sympathetic eyes, through which his very soul shone, that we again complimented him.

"I used to speak some French," he said; "for we had a French governess, as children, and always spoke that language in the nursery; but since I have been here there has been so little occasion to employ it, I have quite forgotten that tongue. Indeed, in four years—for I have stayed some months beyond my time of punishment—I find even my German, which, as I told you, is my father's language, getting rusty, and I am not sure that I could write it in *Lateinische-buchstaben* now at all."

"What a pity," we exclaimed, "that you do not read French and German so as to keep your knowledge up to date."

"We are not allowed to read anything that is not in the Cloister Monastery," he replied, "which for the most part only contains theological books, with a few scientific works, and those are written in Russian, Hebrew, Slavonic, and Greek, so I have no chance, you see."

"Do you mean to say you have no opportunity of keeping up the knowledge you already possess?"

"Not that kind of knowledge. I love botany, but there are no books relating to botany here—so I am forgetting that also. We never read, even the monks seldom do."

"But you have the newspapers," we remarked, horrified to think of a young intellect rotting and mouldering away in such a manner.

"I have not seen a newspaper for nearly four years, never since I came here. We are not allowed such things."

"But you said you were sent here for only three years'

punishment—how does it happen you have remained for nearly four?"

"Because I chose to stay on; you see I have lost touch with the world. My parents sent me here against my will, now I stay here against their will, because they have unfitted me by the life I have led here for that from which I came."

We listened appalled.

"Will you tell me some news, kind ladies?" he added, the while a mournful look came into his face, "for, as the *Igumen* said I might take you round to-day and stay with you, I should like to hear something to tell the others to-night."

"What sort of news?" we asked, a lump rising in our throats as we realised the sadness of this young life. Gently born and gently bred, educated as a gentleman, for nearly four years he had mixed with those beneath him, socially and intellectually, until he had almost reached their level. He lived with those by birth his inferiors, although he kept himself smart and clean and tidy.

"Is Queen Victoria still on the throne in England?" he asked.

"Yes, yes," we answered, "of course she is."

"And what of Gladstone and Lord Salisbury?" he asked.

"Yes, they are alive," we replied, delighted at his human interest.

"Oh!" he said, "I remember Home Rule was written about when I last saw the papers. Home Rule for Ireland like one has in Finland."

Hardly believing in his total innocence of the outer world, we asked—

"Does no one ever really see a paper in this monastery?"

"The *Igumen* does, I think, no one else; but I did hear, through visitors, that our young Tzarwitch had been made Tzar lately."

Oh! the pity of it all. Talking to this beautiful boy was like speaking to a spirit from another world.

We told him of the Moscow fêtes a month before, of the

terrible crush and hideous deaths on the very threshold of rejoicing, and ransacked our brains as to what would interest an educated young man, whose knowledge of the events that had engrossed his fellows for four whole years was a perfect blank.

"Have you heard of horseless carriages?" we asked.

"No. What are they; what do you mean? Don't joke please, because every true word you say is of value to me you see," he said in an almost beseeching tone, with a wistful expression in his eyes.

It was very touching, and we almost wept over his boyish pleasure at our description of modern doings. We told him of the *Sordavala* Festival; of bicycles, and how ladies rode them; how the Prince of Wales had won the Derby; of everything and anything we could think of, and he sat, poor lad, the while sipping tea without milk or sugar as though it were nectar, and eating white bread, as if the most tasty of French confections.

"You *are* good to me," he said; "you are kind to tell me," and tears sparkled in his eyes.

"Why, why," in distress we asked him, "do you stay here?"

"It is very nice," he said, but we heard that strange ring in his voice again.

"But to live here is selfish and wrong; you live for yourself, you do not teach the ignorant, or heal the sick; you bury yourself away from temptation, so there is no virtue in being good. You are educated in mind and strong in body; you could do much finer work for your God by going into the world than by staying at *Valamo*. You ought to mix among your fellows, help them in their lives, and show them a good example in your own."

"You think so?" he almost gasped, rising from his seat. "So help me, God! I have been feeling as much myself. I know there is something wrong in this reposeful life; I feel —I feel sometimes—and yet, *I am very happy here*." A statement it was quite impossible to believe.

We spoke to him very earnestly, for there was something deeply touching about the lad, and then he told us he was free to go if he chose. He explained that when his penance was performed and he was free to leave, some months before, he had become so accustomed to the life, he chose to remain. But that, latterly, doubts began to trouble him, and now, well, he was glad to hear us talk; it had done him good, for he never, never before talked so much to strangers, and it was perhaps wrong for him to do so now. If such were the case, might Heaven forgive him!

"But come," he finished, as though desirous of changing the subject, "I must show you our refectory."

We had become so entranced by the boy, his doubts and fears, that we rose reluctantly to follow the gaunt youth, whose bodily and mental strength seemed wasting away in that atmosphere of baleful repose.

He showed us the great dining-hall where the wooden tables were laid for supper. There were no cloths; cloths being only used for great feast-days, and the simplicity was greater than a convict prison, and the diet far more strict. Yet these men chose it of their own free will! No wonder our starving classes elect to live in prison at the country's expense during the cold winter months, and to sleep in our public parks during the summer; such a life is far preferable, more free and well cared for than that of the Russian monk.

Little brown earthenware soup plates, with delicious pale-green glazed china linings, stood in front of every monk's place. Benches without backs were their seats, and tall wooden boxes their salt-cellars! On each table stood a couple of large pewter soup-tureens filled with small beer, they drink from a sort of pewter soup ladle, which they replace on the edge of the pot after use.

What about germ disease in such a place, O ye bacteriologists? But certainly the average monk looks very ill, even when presumably healthy!

In the olden feudal days in England meals were arranged

in precisely the same way, as may be seen to-day in College Halls at the Universities or at the Temple. Here in the Monastery the raised dais at the end was occupied by the *Igumen*, seated on a chair of state; his most important monks were next him, then came the lower grades, and below the wooden salts the novices and apprentices.

Three meals a day are served in this hall, a long grace preceding and closing each, and a certain number of the younger men are told off to wait on the others, which they have to do as silently as possible, while portions of the Bible are read out by a monk during each meal from a high desk.

After leaving the dining-room we went over the workshops, where in winter everything of every sort is made; these 500 men—if they do not work for the outer world—work for themselves and their island home. They build their churches and other edifices, make the bricks and mortar, their coats and clothes, their boots and shoes, mould their pottery, carve their wooden church ornamentations, shape them in plaster, or beat them in metal. There are goldsmiths and joiners, leather tanners and furriers, amongst them, and during the long dreary frozen winters they all ply these trades. Verily a small body of socialists, each working for the general good of the little colony.

It is then they make the sacred pictures, the *ikons* for which the monastery is famous, which, together with rosaries and photos, are sold during the summer months to visitors. When these things are disposed of the monks count their profits and make their bills by the aid of coloured balls on a frame, such as children sometimes learn to count with. There are five red balls on one bar, five yellow on another, etc., and by some deft and mysterious movement of these balls the monk, like any ordinary Russian shopkeeper, quickly makes up his bills and presents his account.

"You must come in one of our pilgrim boats to another of our islands," said our friend Sebastian, to which proposal we readily agreed.

What a boat it was! Talk of the old Viking ships that

sailed to America or Iceland, and held a couple of hundred persons. The *Valamo* pilgrim's boat did not fall so very far short in bulk and capacity of those old historic craft. Six oars on each side, and three or four men at each, with plenty of room in the well, or at the stern and bows, for another hundred persons to stow themselves away. We were not pilgrims, and the *Igumen* had kindly ordered a steam launch to tug us. Some fifty or sixty other visitors took advantage of the occasion and accompanied us on our "water party."

It was certainly very beautiful and most unique. Monks in all ages and all countries have ever seemed to pitch upon the most lovely spots of mother earth in which to plant their homes, and our friends at *Valamo* were not behind in this respect.

We were amazed at the beautiful waterways, constantly reminding us of the backwaters in the Thames. On the banks we passed farms; splendid-looking creameries, where all the milk was now being made into butter or cheese for the winter,—luxuries denied, as has been said before, to *Valamo* during the fasting season.

We came to a primitive pier, where the trees hung right over the sides, the leaves dipping into the water. It was very secluded, very beautiful, and wonderfully reposeful. Our path lay through a lovely wood, where wild flowers grew in profusion, among them a kind of wild orchid with a delicious perfume, and the small wild arum lily. It is strange that such rare plants should grow there, when one remembers that for six or eight months of the year the land is ice-bound. On the island we visited a small church, within the sacred precincts of which no woman's foot dare tread, but we had a peep at another chapel where a hermit once lived. He never spoke to any one for seven years, and slept nightly in his coffin, in which he was not buried, however, it being necessary to keep the article for visitors to gaze upon.

On our return we much enjoyed a cup of tea in our

cloister chamber, where the Russian *samovar* was boiling in readiness. It was not long ere the sonorous monastery bell tolled six, and every one turned towards the church for service, which was to last till about nine o'clock—service of that duration being a daily occurrence. Every one stands the whole of the time. After nine o'clock the monks and novices go to bed, but at three A.M. they all have to get up again for another service, which lasts for two or three hours more. Altogether at *Valamo* about five or six hours out of every twenty-four are spent in prayer.

During the winter months every one in the monastery has to be present at both the day and night services, namely, stand or kneel on bare flags in the church for the time just mentioned. In summer the authorities are not so strict, and provided all attend the service every night, and the second one two or three times a week, nothing is said about a couple or so being missed.

It being a monastery church, during the service at which we were present, all the men stood on one side, the women, visitors, and pilgrims on the other. Afterwards, in the Greek Churches in St. Petersburg, we found that the sexes were not divided in this manner.

It was the first time we had been present at a Russian service, and the chief impression left on our minds was the endless movement of the congregation. They were everlastingly crossing themselves, not once but two or three times running, and every few minutes they all did it again; then about every twelfth person would kneel down, and putting his hands on the floor before him touch the ground with his forehead like the Mohammedans when they pray to the Prophet, and tell their beads as true monks tell theirs. One man we watched go down *forty times running* and cross himself three times between each reverence! A penance, no doubt, but a penance unlikely to do any one much good, at least so we could not help thinking.

Again, a woman, a poor fat old pilgrim, who got on her knees with the greatest difficulty, remained with her fore-

head on the ground for at least five minutes, till we really began to wonder if she were dead; but at last she rose after some difficulty, for we had to help her up, and we fervently hoped that was the end of her penance, poor old soul. Not a bit of it; a quarter of an hour afterwards she was down again, and when we left she was still praying. Then a strange-looking sort of priest came and stood beside us, instead of joining the other men who clustered round the *Igumen's* throne or before the altar, and, after scrutinising him for some time, surprised at a man standing among the women, we discovered *he* was a *she* come on a pilgrimage to pray. She of strange garb was an abbess!

We were getting very tired of standing listening to the monotonous reading of the psalms, watching the priests walking about in their long black robes, taking their hats off and on, and endlessly kneeling or bowing to the great *Igumen* who stood during the whole ceremony on a carved wooden throne covered with scarlet velvet. The singing was very unequal. The choirs came in from both sides of the altar twice, and formed themselves into a half circle on the floor of the church—as choirs used to do at the representations of the Greek plays of old. We were well-nigh suffocated with incense and the strange odour that emanates from a Russian peasant, and had begun to think of those queer little wooden beds in which we were to pass the night—and what a contrast the primitive cell was to that gorgeous glittering church—when we saw our "beautiful boy" beckoning to us.

We followed him out.

"I have bad news for you," he said; "your boat for to-morrow is to leave to-night—in half an hour."

"Why?" we asked, aghast.

"The other passengers desire to leave to-night and proceed by way of the *Holy Island* back to *Sordavala;* they all wish it except you, so the captain is going."

"But is there no other boat for us?"

"None to-morrow," he replied.

CHAPTER V

SORDAVALA, OR A MUSICAL FESTIVAL

TERROR had entered our souls when we read in the *Nya Pressen*, the day before leaving for the musical festival at *Sordavala*, the following: "*Sordavala* has only 1300 inhabitants, and some 10,000 people have arrived for the *Juhla*. They are sleeping on floors and tables, and any one who can get even a share in a bed must be more than satisfied. Food cannot be procured, and general discomfort reigns." This was not cheerful; indeed the prospect seemed terrible, more especially when, after getting up at five o'clock, and driving some miles to *Wiborg*, we arrived at the station only to find the train crammed from end to end, and not a chance of a seat anywhere. Confusion reigned, every one was struggling with every one else for places, and the scrimmage was as great as though it were "a cheap trip to Margate and back" in the height of the season. There were only second and third-class carriages, with a sort of fourth, which was said to hold "forty men or eight horses," and had no windows, but was provided with rough benches and odd boxes for the passengers to sit on. In such a terrible railway carriage all the members of the brass band travelled with their music stands and instruments.

We ran from end to end of the platform in despair. It was the only train of the day, and *full*. Even Frau von Lilly, with all her Swedish and all her Finnish, could not succeed in finding places. At last an official stepped forward, and, touching his hat, remarked—

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"There are no seats to be had in any compartment, but, as so many persons desire to go on, we shall probably send a relief train in an hour."

"Are we to wait on the chance of 'probably'?"

"Yes, I think you must. In fact, I am almost sure you must; but in any case you cannot go in that; it is just off."

And sure enough away steamed number one before the stolid Finns could make up their minds to despatch number two; nevertheless, an hour afterwards the relief train was ready and comparatively empty, so we travelled in peace.

All these slow arrangements and avoidances of committal to any announcement of fact, constantly reminded us of Scotland—indeed, it is quite remarkable to notice how closely a Finn and a Highlander resemble each other in appearance, in stolid worth, and dogged deliberation; how they eat porridge or *gröt*, oatcake or *knäckebröd*, and have many other strange little peculiarities of manner and diet in common.

We got under weigh at last, and settled down for a few restful hours in a comfortable Finnish railway carriage. The train, ever dignified and deliberate of pace, had just passed *Jaakkima* in the South-East of Finland, almost due North from Petersburg. The heat was great that June day, and here and there, as the engine puffed through the pine forests, dense columns of smoke rising from the woods near the railway lines alarmed all who beheld, and warned the neighbouring peasants to dig trenches, which alone could stay the fierce flames, rapidly gathering force, that meant destruction.

At every station we paused, not necessarily for passengers to alight or ascend, but to stock our engine with fuel. There, stacked high and wide and broad, was the wood cut into pieces about two feet long, intended to feed our locomotive, and a couple of men were always in readiness to throw it into the tender as quickly as possible, compatible with the slowness of the Finn.

The heat in the train was so intense that it made us feel drowsy, but, as we fortunately had the end compartment in the corridor-carriage, we were able to open the door and get a breath of air. A bridge joined us to the next waggon, and a very amusing scene presented itself. The guard was flirting with a Finnish maid, a typical peasant, with a comely figure, set off by a well-fitting bodice. She had very high cheek-bones and a wondrous round moon face; a large, good-tempered mouth filled with beautiful teeth, and a good complexion, and weak, thin, straight flaxen hair, combed back from a very high forehead. She wore the usual handkerchief over her head. Had she been dark instead of fair, judging by the width of her face and the lines of her eyes, she might have been a Chinese; but to an English mind she appeared anything but beautiful, although clean and healthy looking. She, like many others of her class, had the neatest hands and feet imaginable, although the latter were encased in black mohair boots with elastic sides, a very favourite foot-covering in Finland.

All along the line there ran a sort of tumble-down wooden fencing, loosely made, and about 4 or 5 feet high, meant to keep back the snow in winter. The very thought of snow was refreshing on that broiling day!

As we gasped with the heat, and pondered over the scrambled meal at *Jaakkima*, we listened to the strangely sad but entrancing singing of a number of peasants in the next waggon, all bound like ourselves for *Sordavala*, although they were really rehearsing for the Festival, while we were proceeding thither merely as spectators.

How they flirted those two on the bridge outside our carriage! Spite of the hard outlines of her face, and her peculiarly small Finnish eyes, the maiden managed to ogle and smile upon the guard standing with his hands upon the rail; so slender was the support, that it seemed as if he might readily fall off the train and be killed by the wheels below. The flirtation was not only on her side, for pre-

sently he took her hand, a fat round hand, with a golden circle upon one of the fingers, which denoted betrothal or marriage, and pressed it fondly. We could not understand their Finnish speech; but there is a language comprehensible to all, in every clime! That the pair were in love no one could for a moment doubt, and that they heeded nothing of those quaint old Finnish chants, distinctly audible from the opposite carriage, was evident, for they talked on and on.

We passed *Niva;* here and there the waters of a lake glinted in the sunshine, or a river wound away to the sea, strewn with floating wood, as though its waters were one huge raft.

The singing ceased; save the merry laugh of the Finnish girl, nothing but the click-cluck-click of the wheels was audible. The guard leaned over her, whispered in her ear, then, as if yielding to some sudden impulse, pressed her to his heart; and, still to the accompaniment of that endless click-cluck-click, implanted a kiss on her full round lips. For a moment they stood thus, held in warm embrace, muttering those sweet nothings which to lovers mean all the world.

Suddenly the door behind them opened, and one of the singers, nervous and excited from the long practice of his national airs, came upon the bridge to let the gentle zephyrs cool his heated brow.

All smiles, this sunburnt blonde, whose hair fell in long locks, cut off straight, like the ancient saints in pictures, stood before us—his pink flannel shirt almost matching the colour of his complexion.

In a moment all was changed; his happy smile vanished into a glance of deadly hate, the colour fled from his face, leaving him ashy-pale, fire literally shot from his eyes as he gazed upon his affianced bride; but he did not speak.

His hand violently sought his belt, and in a moment the long blade of one of those Scandinavian *puukko*—knives all peasants use—gleamed in the sunshine. For an instant he

balanced it on high, and then, with a shriek more wild than human, he plunged the blade deep down into his betrothed's white breast.

Like a tiger the guilty guard sprang upon him; madly they fought while the girl lay still and senseless at their feet, a tiny stream of blood trickling from her breast.

Northern rage once roused is uncontrollable; and there, on the bridge of the moving train, those two men struggled for mastery, till—yes, yes—the light railing gave way, and together the hater and the hated fell over the side, and were cut to pieces by the wheels!

What a moment! a groan, a piercing shriek rent the air!

Then, with a gasp, hot and cold, and wet by turns, we woke to find it was all a dream!

. . . . . .

The run to *Sordavala* proved a hot and tedious journey of seven hours, but even dusty railway journeys must come to an end, and we arrived at our destination in North-East Finland about three o'clock.

The crowd at the country station was horrible, and the clamour for cabs, carts, and the general odds and ends of vehicles in waiting to transfer us to our destination, reminded us much of Ober Ammergau on a smaller scale.

This *Sordavala* festival is really the outcome of an old religious ceremony, just as the Welsh Eisteddfod is a child of Druidical meetings for prayer and song. In ancient days bards sang and prayed, and now both in Finland and in England the survival is a sort of musical competition.

Our Eisteddfod, encouraged by the landed proprietors of Wales, forms a useful bond between landlord and tenant, employer and employed. It is held yearly in different towns, and prizes are given for choir singing, for which fifty to a hundred voices will assemble from one village, all the choirs joining together in some of the great choruses. Rewards are also given for knitting, for the best national costumes, for solo singing, violin and harp playing, for original poems in Welsh, and for recitations.

In Finland the competition, strangely enough, also takes place once a year, and dates back to the old *Runo* Singers, who orally handed down the national music from generation to generation. Each time the Festival is, as in Wales, held in a different town, the idea being to raise the tastes of the populace, and to encourage the practice of music among a thoroughly musical people. Clubs or choirs are sent from all corners of Finland to compete; the old national airs—of which there are hundreds, ay thousands—are sung, and that unique native instrument the *Kantele* is played.

It was *Elias Lönnrot* who collected these *Kantele* songs. For years and years he travelled about the country gathering them together by ear and word of mouth, and, having weeded out the repetitions, he edited the famous *Kalevala*, and later collected quantities of other songs from the heathen times, and published them as *Kanteletar*.

Thus much ancient music and verse was revived that had almost been forgotten. But of this we must speak further in the next chapter.

That Finland is thoroughly musical may be inferred from the dozens of choirs sent to the *Sordavala* Festival from all parts of the country. The peasant voices, in spite of being but slightly trained, or at all events trained very little, sing together wonderfully. Indeed, it was surprising to find how they could all take their proper parts, and keep to them; but the supreme delight, perhaps, of the Festival was the student corps, composed of 50 men from the University of *Helsingfors*, who sang together most beautifully, the choir being conducted by one of themselves. They had some glorious voices among them, and as they sang the national airs of Finland, marching backwards and forwards to the park, their feet keeping time with their music, the effect of their distant singing in the pine-woods was most enthralling.

Strangely enough, when they went to sing on the public platform raised in the park for the occasion, they wore evening dress and white gloves. Dress-clothes are some-

what of a rarity in Finland, as they are in many other continental countries; but there they stood in a semicircle on the dais, each man with his white velvet student cap in his hand, and, to the spectators, standing a little in the distance, the effect of snowy-white shirt, white gloves, and white cap shown up in the glancing sunbeams by black clothes, was somewhat funny.

The performers met with tremendous applause, and certainly deserved it. Although German students often sing beautifully, and are indeed famous for their rendering of the *Folkslieder*, those from *Helsingfors* sang as well if not better.

We often dined at the same hotel where they lodged, and when they marched in they sang a grace. After they had finished their dinner, they generally, before leaving, sang two or three songs by special request of visitors dining at the various tables.

Morning, noon, and night those students sang! Small bands of them went to meet the trains coming in, if they expected friends, and stood upon the platform lustily singing their welcome. They went to see other friends off, and, amidst much doffing of caps, they sang farewell songs. They marched in torchlight processions — although the torches were not very successful when all was daylight— and everywhere they went they met with the greatest enthusiasm.

Modern singing at the Festival, in parts and glees, was very good, showing the great musical talent of the people, while especially delightful were the out-of-door concerts. Another charm of the Festival consisted in the exhibition of peasants' work.

As we entered the museum where we were to hear the *Kantele*, we stood transfixed. At a bare wooden table a quite, quite old man with long-flowing locks was sitting with his elbows on the boards, his hands stretched over his *Kantele*, which he was playing delightfully.

The small flat musical instrument reminded one of the

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zither of Tyrol, while the strange airs bore some similarity to the bagpipe music of Scotland, at least in time, which, like the piper, the old man beat with his foot. His blue eyes were fixed on the wall opposite, with a strange, weird, far-off look, and never for one moment did he relax his gaze. He seemed absolutely absorbed by his music, and as the queer old figure—a sort of Moses with his long beard—played his native instrument, amid the quaint trappings of the museum for background, we felt enthralled by the sombre surroundings and curious apparition, who might have been *Wäinämöinen* himself, the mythological god of music in Finland.

Others followed; they all played very charmingly, and their usually sombre faces seemed quite changed by the sounds of music. Music has always played an important part in the history of Finland,—for good be it owned, and not, as Tolstoi has suggested, to arouse the vilest passions.

Look at the faces of the people dowered with such legends. The *Runo* singers live in another world from ours. Theirs is the land of poetry and romance; theirs the careless, happy dream of life. The things of this world, the sordid littleness, the petty struggles, the very fight for bread, they wot not of, for they are content with little.

They sit and sing, and dream. See the far-away look on yon man's features; see how intensely he gazes on some vision painted visibly for him on the blank wall. His very face and mind seem transported to other realms. As the song rises and falls his expression alters, and when he strikes those stirring chords on the *Kantele* and speaks of bloodshed and war his whole being seems changed!

We noticed one peculiarity with the *Runo* Singers, viz., that each vocalist repeated the whole line twice. For instance—

"The old man fished." All the others took up the word "fished," and then every one present sang the whole of the line a second time in company with the original singer, again repeating the word *fished* at the end alone. After

that the original singer took up the next line by himself, his friends repeating the last word, ere joining him in the repetition of the line itself.

This seemed to be a speciality, for we noticed it again and again, and, as the performers all chanted well together, the effect was very interesting; at the same time the practice unduly lengthens the progress of the songs, some of which go on for hours in a dull, monotonous recitative!

We always had to cross the river at *Sordavala* whenever we went out to dinner, or attended any of the concerts, as our home was on one bank and the representations and restaurant on the other, and one old Russian boatman was particularly attentive in waiting about for us at the hours when he thought it likely we should require to be ferried over. His bark was decorated, like all the other craft at *Sordavala*, with birch, which, as we know, is sacred in Finland, and great branches of its silver boughs were cut to ornament the *kuirn* (native boats). It was wonderful what a pretty effect this gave, for they were not little boughs, but rather great branches stuck on the rowlocks in such a manner as to make the boat appear a veritable bower. When several craft were on the water together, they had the effect of a beautiful picture, with the red and pink shirts of the boatmen, and the white or black handkerchiefs over the women's heads.

Our old Russian was a wonderful-looking individual, with shaggy grisly locks which fell in regular ringlets upon his shoulders—the sort of man one would love to paint. Every wrinkle upon his face was italicised by dirt, and his faded red shirt appeared a dream of colour for an artist's eye. He was very much interested in us all, and at last he ventured to ask Frau von Lilly where the ladies came from.

"England," she replied in Russian.

"Ah! I know about England," he returned; "it has many big towns, and they are strong towns. England is much afraid that our Tzar might take those big towns."

"Do you think so?"

"Yes, *I know*; but the ladies do not look English, they are so dark. Is it the fierce sun of their country that has burned them so black?'

We laughed; we had heard of many things, but not often of "the fierce sun of England."

"*You* are not English?" he went on, addressing our friend.

"No," replied Frau von Lilly, "I am a Finlander."

"You? Why, you speak Russian, and you are dark, too; your face is not like a Finn's, it is not wide enough, and your hair is too black. He," pointing to Grandpapa, "is a Finlander, and looks like one."

Fancy such observations from an old Russian boatman! The same wonderful interest in our concerns and welfare was, however, evinced on all sides. The whole town of *Sordavala* had positively thrilled with excitement when the Committee of the Fête learned through a Finlander that some English people were coming to their Festival. Instantly that Committee wrote to say they would do everything they could for the visitors' "komfort," which they certainly did. They gave us the best rooms in the place, they opened their museums for us that we might view them privately, they gave us *Runo* singing entertainments with ourselves for sole audience, they found seats for us in the theatre when every seat was sold, and they treated us in all ways as though we had been princesses. But everything we said was noted, and everything we did cautiously watched; therefore for a short time we tasted something of the horrors of that publicity which must be the bane of existence to royal folk.

Long after we had left *Sordavala* we happened to refer to that town when conversing with some friends.

"Isn't it amusing?" one of them observed. "I saw in the paper the other day that some English people who went to *Sordavala* for the Festival, had written beforehand a letter to the Manager of the Committee to say "they

required a suite of apartments, not higher than the fourth floor, with bath-room."

We could not help smiling. It was the old story of "The Three Black Crows" over again! We had been the only English people at the Festival, we had never written a line ourselves to any member of the Committee; a Finnish friend had done so for us, however, saying "that rooms would be required for three ladies, two English, and one Finnish!"

One of the features of the Festival which interested us the most was a representation, at a little improvised theatre, of a typical modern Finnish play, by Finnish actors.

Anna Liisa was the piece chosen, because it was a peasant drama. It is written by one of Finland's greatest dramatists—perhaps the greatest in the Finnish language—a woman!

It was only a small impromptu theatre, packed to suffocation by a most wonderfully sympathetic audience, but as the play was very representative, we give a slight sketch of it.

The curtain rose on a little peasant log-hut with its huge chimney, where, over a small native stove heated by wood, pots were boiling.

Fixed to a chair was a spinning machine, made of wood and shaped like an umbrella, which twisted round and round, while the bride-elect, with her fair hair hanging down in a plait, sat upon the stage.

Her fiancé says how happy they will be in three weeks when they are married; but *Anna Liisa*, although desperately in love with her betrothed, hangs back, and refuses to sit upon his knee. At last *Johannes* coaxes her to his side, and expresses huge delight at the prospect of their future. He tells her how he loves her with a never-fading love, is certain of her goodness, and that she has never loved any one else; he warmly praises her virtue; but, nevertheless, as he speaks, she shudders. Immediately an old woman comes in (*Husso*), the mother of *Mikko*, a man with whom

Anna Liisa had formerly had some relations; her words are of evil import, for she tells the girl if she marries *Johannes*, who has just left the room, she will do her harm.

Anna pretending not to care, the old woman becomes furious and threatens her.

"I shall tell of your intrigue with my son. I have but to whisper of a——"

"Mother, no, no."

"But I can, and I will, and more than that, may speak of——"

The girl implores, tells of her real, honest love for *Johannes*, beseeches *Mikko's* mother to hold her peace, but the woman is obdurate.

Anna suffers tortures when left alone with her little sister, because the girl will talk of the delights of the coming wedding, and how nice it would be if *Anna Liisa* had a child for her to dress like a doll. The bride's father and mother, who know nothing of their daughter's intrigue, come and drink coffee, and like true peasants they pour the coffee into a saucer, and putting a bit of sugar into their mouths imbibe the beverage through it, supporting the saucer on five fingers. Thus happily they all sit together—a real representation of life in a peasant home. In the midst of it all the former lover, *Mikko*, who was once a servant on the farm, comes in and is very insulting to the bridegroom-elect, and very insinuating to *Anna Liisa*. At last *Johannes* gets angry; threats ensue. *Mikko* says "that he was once engaged to a girl and intends to have her" (looking pointedly at *Anna Liisa*). It seems as if the whole story would be revealed, but at that moment the little sister rushes in to say *Mikko's* horse has run away, and he goes off, leaving the bride and bridegroom alone, when the former implores *Johannes* to trust her always and in everything, which he promises to do, greatly wondering the while at her request.

When the second act opens the father and mother are discussing before *Anna Liisa* her own virtues. They say

what a good wife their child will make, they lay stress upon her honesty, integrity, and truthfulness, and while the words sink into the guilty girl's heart like gall and wormwood, she sits and knits with apparent calmness. At last, however, the parents leave the room, and while she is thinking of following them, in comes *Mikko*. Finding herself alone with *Mikko* the poor girl entreats him to leave her, to leave her in peace and happiness to marry the man she loves, and if possible to forget her guilty past.

"If you marry me you will get peace," he says.

"No. Nor shall I ever know peace again," she replies; "but I may have some happiness."

At this moment her fiancé enters the room. *Mikko* seizes the opportunity to tell him there is a secret between them that will disturb the happiness of all his future life. The girl appeals to *Mikko* by looks and gesticulations, but each time he manages to evade her gaze, and utters such strange insinuations that at last *Johannes* exclaims—

"This is too much!" and a desperate quarrel ensues.

Anna Liisa wishes to speak alone with *Mikko*. To this *Johannes* objects, thinking that *Anna Liisa* ought not to have any secret with *Mikko* unknown to him.

Then the whole family bundles home, having been to the store to buy things for the approaching festival.

"The matter is so," says *Mikko*, "that *Anna Liisa* was my bride four years ago. And now I come to take her, but that fellow has in the meantime——"

The Father. "Your bride! That's a lie."

The Mother. "Good gracious! You want me to believe all kinds of things—*Anna Liisa*—who then was only fifteen years old. Don't listen to such things, *Johannes*. They're only senseless chat. I'll warrant that they have no foundation whatever. Besides, others would certainly have noticed had any such relations existed between them."

Mikko. "It was not noticed. We succeeded in concealing it so well that nobody had the slightest idea."

The Father. "Shut up, *Mikko*, ere I get furious! That

my daughter should have secret intrigues with a groom! Fie, for shame! How dare you spread such vile slander. Had it concerned any other!—But *Anna Liisa*, whom everybody knows to be the most steady and honourable girl in the whole neighbourhood! That you can be so impudent! For shame, I say once more."

Mikko. "Ask *Anna Liisa* herself if I have spoken truth or falsehood."

The Father. "Can't you open your mouth, girl? Clear yourself from such disgusting insults."

The Mother. "Defend yourself, *Anna Liisa*."

Johannes. "Say that he lies, and I will believe you."

Matters have gone too far. The disclosure cannot be put off.

Broken-hearted she only exclaims—

"Oh, good God!"

Mikko in his mad rage fetches his old mother, who corroborates all he has said, and tells the story of *Anna Liisa's* guilt, adding—

"And she could have been put in prison."

"Why?" they all cry in chorus.

"Because she murdered her child."

Anna Liisa says nothing for a time, but finally she falls on her knees before her father and implores his pardon. Then she confesses that everything the woman has said is true, even the accusation that she murdered her own child.

Her father snatches up a hatchet and tries to kill her, in which attempt he would have succeeded had not *Mikko* interfered and dragged her away.

When the third act opens the father, mother, and fiancé are found discussing the situation, and finally deciding to let their friends come to the congratulatory festival on first reading of the banns, and pretend that nothing unusual had happened. Afterwards they could rearrange the relationship.

The mother, who had been watching *Anna Liisa*, is afraid of her curious apathetic behaviour, and looks out of the window, when she sees her setting off in a boat,

apparently with the purpose of self-destruction. She and the fiancé rush off to save her and bring her home. The girl explains in wild despair how she thought she saw her child under the water, and intended to jump in and rescue him. She raves somewhat like Ophelia in *Hamlet*, but her former lover *Mikko* comes back to her, and whispers in her ear. She rejects him violently.

"Let me get away from here," she murmurs to her mother, "let me get away," and a very sad and touching scene ensues.

The little sister bounds in straight from church, and says how lovely it was to hear the banns read, and to think the wedding was so near. She decorates the room with wreaths of pine branches, and festoons of the birch-tree, such festoons as we make into trails with holly and ivy for Christmas decorations. She jumps for joy as the guests begin to arrive, and in this strange play the father actually thinks it right for his daughter to marry *Mikko*, her seducer, whom he welcomes, and they arrange affairs comfortably between them.

This is very remarkable. In most countries it would be considered right for the father to expel his daughter's lover from his house; but in this play of *Minna Canth's* she draws a very Finnish characteristic.

"*Se oli min sallittu*" ("It is so ordained") is a sort of motto amongst this Northern people. Whether it is that they are phlegmatic, wanting in energy, fatalists, or what, one cannot say, but certain it is that they sit down and accept the inevitable as calmly as the Mohammedan does when he remarks: "It is the will of Allah."

The festivities proceed. An old fiddler and more peasants appear. The men sit down on one side of the room, the women on the other, and the former lover, *Mikko*, thinking himself the bridegroom-elect, cheerfully invites every one to dance. The old fiddler strikes up a merry air, and they dance the *jenka*, a sort of schottische, joyously. Gaiety prevails, the girl's father being apparently as happy as his

guests, when the door opens and the rector of the parish and other distinguished guests enter.

"Where is the bride?" it is asked.

No one knew exactly how to answer; *Johannes* no longer wishes to marry her, and she refuses to marry her former lover, *Mikko*.

Again the priest asks: "Where is the bride?"

After waiting some time the door opens slowly. *Anna Liisa* enters and is greeted—as is usual on such occasions—by cries of *Eläköön, eläköön* (let her live!) in chorus. Answering with the unusual words: "Let God's Holy Spirit live in us!" the girl advanced into the room and stood before them, robed in the black gown which it is the fashion for peasant brides in Finland to wear. The clergyman addressed her as a bride.

"I am not a bride," she replies, as she stands sadly alone in her black robe.

"What do you mean? the banns have just been read," he asks.

"All is broken off between *Johannes* and me," she tragically replies, and then, turning to the clergyman, she says: "My conscience won't keep it any longer; for four long years I have——"

Mikko and his mother try all they can to prevent her speaking.

But the clergyman, seeing the girl wishes to say something, thrusts them aside and exhorts her to proceed.

"I am a great sinner," says the girl tremulously. A breathless silence seizes every one present as *Anna* continues, "Four years ago I had a child, in the forest yonder, and, I, poor creature, I killed it."

At this juncture a bailiff, who chanced to be of the company, rises and inquires if her parents knew this at the time.

"No," she answers in clear and dulcet tones, "they knew nothing."

Turning to her heartbroken parents with great earnestness, she says:

"Father and mother, do not grieve for me! Do not sorrow! I am not in trouble any more. You see how glad I am. Never in my life have I felt so happy."

Johannes (touched). "*Anna Liisa*—!"

The Father. "Don't you then consider the disgrace you have brought over our gray hair?"

Anna Liisa. "I repent. Forgive me! Oh, that I could once make good what I have done wrong!"

The Mistress of Ristola and other guests express their sympathy with the parents.

Mikko (aside to *Husso*). "There's nothing more to be done. Things must have their course. Let us be off!

[*Exeunt.*

The Father. "Oh, that I could get into my grave! That's my only hope."

Rector. "Not so, dear friends, not so! You have no reason for sorrow at this moment, but gladness and joy. The Spirit of God has been working in your daughter and has gained the victory. Do not look upon this matter as the world does, but from a higher standpoint. Until to-day *Anna Liisa* has erred. Now she has found the right way. Let us thank and praise the Lord of Heaven!"

Mistress of Ristola. "Yes, it is truly so. It is a chastisement for the flesh, but not to the spirit."

The Father. "We are shortsighted, we human beings. We do not always comprehend the purposes of the Almighty."

The Mother. "And the earthly mind always seeks to govern."

Rector. "Let us strive the more to progress in the life of the Spirit, and by God's help we can win like *Anna Liisa* (grasping *Anna Liisa's* hand). Yes, go in peace, my child. Go where your conscience compels you to go, and the Heavenly Father strengthen you that you may hold out to the end. We did congratulate you on a less important change in external life, but a thousand times more warmly do we congratulate you on the change in your inner life."

Doctor. "I agree with the Rector. Good-bye!"

Anna Liisa (embracing first her father and then her mother). "Good-bye, father! good-bye, mother! good-bye! Good-bye all!"

Chorus. "Good-bye, we wish you happiness."

Johannes. "*Anna Liisa,* won't you bid me farewell?"

Anna Liisa. "Certainly! Good-bye *Johannes.*"

Johannes. "The Lord keep you, *Anna Liisa.* But one word more—you are as pure and good in heart as I thought you from the first."

Anna Liisa. "Thank you for your kindness. . . . I have found everlasting life and happiness. Now, Mr. Bailiff, I am ready, give me the severest punishment you can. I am ready to meet it all."

Rector. "She is following the everlasting road. Blessed is she."

Curtain.

The idea of this very strange play has been undoubtedly taken from one of Tolstoi's well-known books, but *Minna Canth* herself is a great writer. She seizes the subtleties of life, draws character with a strong hand, and appreciates the value of dramatic situations. No wonder the Finlanders admire a woman who writes in their own tongue, and feel proud of her as one of themselves.

Never have I seen an audience weep so much as the audience wept that night at the *Suomalainen Teaatteri* (Finnish Theatre): they positively sobbed. Was it that they seldom saw a play, or was it that the generally phlegmatic Finn once roused is really intensely emotional?

Possibly if the fact were known, unlike a fashionable and blasé assembly, the minds of those spectators were not so actively engaged in criticism, that they could not appreciate healthy enjoyment!

CHAPTER VI

'KALEVALA,' AN EPIC POEM

MANY strange customs still linger in East Finland, probably because the inhabitants, far removed from civilisation, cling tenaciously to the traditions and usages of their forefathers. As a fitting ending therefore to the *Sordavala* Festival, an accurate representation of a native wedding of a hundred years ago was given, perhaps for the reason that the performers were thus naturally enabled to introduce many of the bridal songs contained in their great epic poem, *Kalevala*, and their collection of lyric poems called *Kantéletar*.

The open-air stage was very cleverly arranged, and the performance proved really a dramatic representation of music we had heard the delightful *Runo* singers chanting for days. They were old *Runo* bards, however, and as it was feared their voices would not reach the 8000 or 10,000 people assembled in the open-air arena, younger and stronger folk had been taught the different rôles by them.

The wedding festivities were very unlike anything to which we are accustomed. They began with a formal betrothal. In a log hut sat the bride's family, the mother spinning at one of the wooden erections so closely resembling an oar. The father and his friends were meantime gathered round a table drinking small beer (*Kalja*) from large wooden pots, or rather buckets, called *haarikka*. Each man helped himself out of the *haarikka* by dipping into that vessel the usual wooden spoon and sipping its contents, after which performance he replaced the spoon in the bucket, a mode of

drinking calculated to fill the souls of all bacteriologists with horror, prevalent in Finland!

Thus happily occupied sat the family till the bridegroom and his friends arrived.

It is not considered proper for an intending bridegroom ever to propose in person, consequently a spokesman has always to be employed, who expatiates on the many excellent qualities possessed by the modest lover.

Even the spokesman, however, deems it strict etiquette at first to prevaricate concerning the real nature of his errand, and consequently the actor told a cock-and-bull story about the purchase of a horse! rather a transparent bit of make-believe considering the matter had been quietly arranged previously.

At last, after some ridiculous talk about that imaginary horse, a formal request was made for the daughter's hand, and finally the bride herself appeared, solemnly led in as if a prisoner.

Silent and alone, with head bent sadly down, she stood in the middle of the room till asked if she were willing "To marry this man?" when, without looking up, she answered "Yes."

Then the "weeping woman" who is hired for such occasions—just as in days, happily gone by, English families used to hire mutes for funerals—put her arm round the bride's waist, and, with bowed head, swinging her body to and fro the while, began in a most melancholy voice to sing "The Bride's Lament to her Home." The paid professional chants the words of the *Kalevala*, which are supposed to embody every bride's sentiments, implores her parents not to hurry her away. She begs her brother to keep her, not to let the breach between them be so large as the *Lodoga* Lake; might she remain even so long in her father's house as it will take to catch the fish and cook them?

After that she was placed in a chair, and her mother, with pomp and gravity, undid her "maiden plait," her loosened hair denoting that she could no longer be regarded

as a maiden. All her relations came and pulled at her hair, which fell over her shoulders, to assure themselves the plait was really undone. Then the *weeping woman*, swaying to and fro as before, sang another dirge over her—a most melancholy form of betrothal, we thought—and finally put a white linen cap on the bride's head, trimmed with lace, which completely concealed her face. Thus covered, the bride and the weeping woman sat side by side on chairs, when, still swaying their bodies as if in unutterable grief, they recited more bridal songs, all of the same dreary character. Finally, the bride had a verse sung for her by the weeping woman addressed to her parents, to each of whom she clung in turn. Her father, mother, brothers, sisters, etc., were singly poetically addressed after the following doleful but remarkable fashion :—

O the anguish of the parting,
O the pain of separation,
From these walls renowned and ancient,
From this village of the Northland,
From these scenes of peace and plenty,
Where my faithful mother taught me,
Where my father gave instruction
To me in my happy childhood,
When my years were few and tender!
As a child I did not fancy,
Never thought of separation
From the confines of this cottage,
From these dear old hills and mountains ;
But, alas! I now must journey,
Since I now cannot escape it ;
Empty is the bowl of parting,
All the fare-well beer is taken,
And my husband's sledge is waiting,
With the break-board looking southward,
Looking from my father's dwelling.

How shall I give compensation,
How repay, on my departure,
All the kindness of my mother,
All the counsel of my father,
All the friendship of my brother,
All my sister's warm affection?

Gratitude to thee, dear father,
For my father life and blessings,
For the comforts of thy table,
For the pleasures of my childhood!
Gratitude to thee, dear mother,
For thy tender care and guidance,
For my birth and for my culture,
Nurtured by thy purest life-blood!
Gratitude to thee, dear brother,
Gratitude to thee, sweet sister,
To the servants of my childhood,
To my many friends and playmates!

Never, never, aged father,
Never, thou, beloved mother,
Never, ye, my kindred spirits,
Never harbour care nor sorrow,
Never fall to bitter weeping,
Since thy child has gone to strangers,
To the meadows of *Wainola*,
From her father's fields and firesides.
Shines the Sun of the Creator,
Shines the golden Moon of *Ukko*,
Glitter all the stars of heaven,
In the firmament of ether,
Full as bright on other homesteads;
Not upon my father's uplands,
Not upon my home in childhood,
Shines the Star of Joyance only.

Now the time has come for parting
From my father's golden firesides,
From my brother's welcome hearth-stone,
From the chambers of my sister,
From my mother's happy dwelling;
Now I leave the swamps and lowlands,
Leave the grassy vales and mountains,
Leave the crystal lakes and rivers,
Leave the shores and sandy shallows,
Leave the white-capped surging billows,
Where the maidens swim and linger,
Where the mermaids sing and frolic;
Leave the swamps to those that wander,
Leave the cornfields to the plowman,
Leave the forests to the weary,
Leave the heather to the rover,

Leave the copses to the stranger,
Leave the alleys to the beggar,
Leave the courtyards to the rambler,
Leave the portals to the servant,
Leave the matting to the sweeper,
Leave the highways to the roebuck,
Leave the woodland-glens to lynxes,
Leave the lowlands to the wild-geese,
And the birch-tree to the cuckoo.
Now I leave these friends of childhood,
Journey southward with my husband,
To the arms of Night and Winter,
O'er the ice-grown seas of Northland.

All this must have seemed very sad to the bridegroom, who sat dumb in a corner, a perfect nonentity!

Moral for all young men—Never get married in Finland!

The second scene represented the wedding. It was the bridegroom's house. They had been to the church, and he was bringing her home. The guests were assembled to receive her, some baking cakes in great haste, others arranging the pots of *Kalja*, all excited and joyful.

At last some one rushed in to say "They are coming, they are coming," and immediately appeared a procession of peasants with the bride and bridegroom *hand in hand*. She wore a dark-red cashmere gown with a handsomely embroidered white apron, and large round silver brooch, such as the Highlanders of Scotland use to fasten their kilt; but she was still covered by the linen cap with its lace adornments, which hung over her face. She was solemnly escorted to a seat by the table, and only raised this veil when the meal began. After "the breakfast" was over, four young men and four girls danced a sort of lancers, with very grand variations, and executed gymnastic feats—frog dancing and a sort of Highland-reel step,—very pretty and very quaint. The bride and bridegroom did not join in the measure—both sat solemn as judges; indeed, a *Karlajan* wedding is a monstrous sad affair for the bridegroom, at all

events, who plays a rôle of no importance, while it must be a melancholy business for the bride.

The men's dresses were of ordinary cloth with bright-coloured linen shirts, and leather boots turned up at the toe, the soft leather nearly reaching to the knee, the last two or three inches being laced *behind*, so as to enable the wearer to pull them on. The sisters of the bride wore crowns composed of plain bands of various-coloured ribbons —nearly a quarter of a yard high in front, but diminishing towards the back, where the ends of the ribbons hung below the waist.

The words of the bride's lament are so strange, that we give some of them from *Kalevala*, thinking every man who reads the lines will sympathise with the wretched bridegroom, and every woman wish to have as devoted a husband as the young man is exhorted to make.

But alas! there comes a day of reckoning, when he may "instruct her with a willow," and even "use the birch-rod from the mountains."

THE BRIDE'S FAREWELL

Bridegroom, thou beloved hero,
Brave descendant of thy fathers,
When thou goest on a journey,
When thou drivest on the highway,
Driving with the Rainbow-daughter,
Fairest bride of *Sariola*,
Do not lead her as a titmouse,
As a cuckoo of the forest,
Into unfrequented places,
Into copses of the borders,
Into brier-fields and brambles,
Into unproductive marshes;
Let her wander not, nor stumble
On opposing rocks and rubbish.
Never in her father's dwelling,
Never in her mother's courtyard,
Has she fallen into ditches,
Stumbled hard against the fences,
Run through brier-fields, nor brambles,
Fallen over rocks, nor rubbish.

Magic bridegroom of *Wainola*,
Wise descendant of the heroes,
Never let thy young wife suffer,
Never let her be neglected,
Never let her sit in darkness,
Never leave her unattended.
Never in her father's mansion,
In the chambers of her mother,
Has she sat alone in darkness,
Has she suffered for attention;
Sat she by the crystal window,
Sat and rocked, in peace and plenty,
Evenings for her father's pleasure,
Mornings for her mother's sunshine.
Never mayest thou, O bridegroom,
Lead the Maiden of the Rainbow
To the mortar filled with sea-grass,
There to grind the bark for cooking,
There to bake her bread from stubble,
There to knead her dough from tan-bark.
Never in her father's dwelling,
Never in her mother's mansion,
Was she taken to the mortar,
There to bake her bread from sea-grass.
Thou should'st lead the Bride of Beauty
To the garner's rich abundance,
There to draw the till of barley,
Grind the flower and knead for baking,
There to brew the beer for drinking,
Wheaten flour for honey-biscuits.

Hero-bridegroom of *Wainola*,
Never cause thy Bride of Beauty
To regret her day of marriage;
Never make her shed a tear-drop,
Never fill her cup with sorrow.
Should there ever come an evening
When thy wife shall feel unhappy,
Put the harness on thy racer,
Hitch the fleet-foot to the snow-sledge,
Take her to her father's dwelling,
To the household of her mother;
Never in thy hero-lifetime,
Never while the moonbeams glimmer,
Give thy fair spouse evil treatment,
Never treat her as thy servant;

Do not bar her from the cellar,
Do not lock thy best provisions.
Never in her father's mansion,
Never by her faithful mother
Was she treated as a hireling.

Honoured bridegroom of the Northland,
Proud descendant of the fathers,
If thou treatest well thy young wife,
Worthily wilt thou be treated;
When thou goest to her homestead,
When thou visitest her father,
Thou shalt meet a cordial welcome.

Censure not the Bride of Beauty,
Never grieve thy Rainbow-maiden,
Never say in tones reproachful,
She was born in lowly station,
That her father was unworthy;
Honoured are thy bride's relations,
From an old-time tribe her kindred;
When of corn they sowed a measure,
Each one's portion was a kernel;
When they sowed a cask of flax-seed,
Each received a thread of linen.
Never, never, magic husband,
Treat thy beauty-bride unkindly,
Teach her not with lash of servants,
Strike her not with thongs of leather;
Never has she wept in anguish
From the birch-whip of her mother.
Stand before her like a rampart,
Be to her a strong protection,
Do not let thy mother chide her,
Let thy father not upbraid her,
Never let thy guests offend her;
Should thy servants bring annoyance,
They may need the master's censure;
Do not harm the Bride of Beauty,
Never injure her thou lovest;
Three long years hast thou been wooing,
Hoping every month to win her.

Counsel with the bride of heaven,
To thy young wife give instruction,
Kindly teach thy bride in secret,

In the long and dreary evenings,
When thou sittest at the fireside ;
Teach one year, in words of kindness,
Teach with eyes of love a second,
In the third year teach with firmness.
If she should not heed thy teaching,
Should not hear thy kindly counsel,
After three long years of effort,
Cut a reed upon the lowlands,
Cut a nettle from the border,
Teach thy wife with harder measures.
In the fourth year, if she heed not,
Threaten her with sterner treatment,
With the stalks of rougher edges,
Use not yet the thongs of leather,
Do not touch her with the birch-whip.
If she should not heed this warning,
Should she pay thee no attention,
Cut a rod upon the mountains,
Or a willow in the valleys,
Hide it underneath thy mantle,
That the stranger may not see it,
Show it to thy wife in secret,
Shame her thus to do her duty,
Strike not yet, though disobeying.
Should she disregard this warning,
Still refuse to heed thy wishes,
Then instruct her with the willow,
Use the birch-rod from the mountains,
In the closet of thy dwelling,
In the attic of thy mansion ;
Strike her not upon the common,
Do not conquer her in public,
Lest the villagers should see thee,
Lest the neighbours hear her weeping,
And the forests learn thy troubles.
Touch thy wife upon the shoulders,
Let her stiffened back be softened ;
Do not touch her on the forehead,
Nor upon the ears, nor visage ;
If a ridge be on her forehead,
Or a blue mark on her eyelids,
Then her mother would perceive it,
And her father would take notice,
All the village-workmen see it,
And the village-women ask her :

"'Hast thou been in heat of battle,
Hast thou struggled in a conflict,
Or perchance the wolves have torn thee,
Or the forest bears embraced thee,
Or the black-wolf be thy husband,
And the bear be thy protector?"

. . . . .

By the fireplace lay a gray-beard,
On the hearth-stone lay a beggar,
And the old man spake as follows:—
"Never, never, hero-husband,
Follow thou thy young wife's wishes,
Follow not her inclinations,
As, alas! I did, regretful;
Bought my bride the bread of barley,
Veal, and beer, and best of butter,
Fish and fowl of all descriptions,
Beer I bought, home-brewed and sparkling,
Wheat from all the distant nations,
All the dainties of the Northland;
But this all was unavailing,
Gave my wife no satisfaction,
Often came she to my chamber,
Tore my sable locks in frenzy,
With a visage fierce and frightful,
With her eyeballs flashing anger,
Scolding on and scolding ever,
Ever speaking words of evil,
Using epithets the vilest,
Thought me but a block for chopping.
Then I sought for other measures,
Used on her my last resources,
Cut a birch-whip in the forest,
And she spake in terms endearing;
Cut a juniper or willow,
And she called me 'hero-darling';
When with lash my wife I threatened,
Hung she on my neck with kisses."
Thus the bridegroom was instructed,
Thus the last advices given.

. . . . . .

Then the Maiden of the Rainbow,
Beauteous bride of *Ilmarinen*,
Sighing heavily and moaning,
Fell to weeping, heavy-hearted,
Spake these words from depths of sorrow:

"Near, indeed, the separation,
Near, alas! the time for parting,
Near the time of my departure;
Fare thee well, my dear old homestead,
Fare ye well, my native bowers;
It would give me joy unceasing
Could I linger here for ever.
Now farewell, ye halls and portals
Leading to my father's mansion;
It would give me joy unceasing
Could I linger here for ever."

What a delightful representation! A beautiful picture of peasant life a hundred years ago. The charm of the singing in the open air, the people dressed in the old costumes, the scene really correct, old spinning wheels, etc., having been borrowed from the museum for the purpose.

It was a charming picture, one well worth retaining on the retina of memory.

It was the last day; the *Karlajan* wedding was over, and all the choirs, numbering altogether nearly 1000 voices, sang chants and hymns most beautifully, their combined voices being heard far through the woods and across the lakes.

It was really a grand spectacle, those thousand men and women on the platform, comprising peasants, farmers, students, professors, all brought together merely to sing, while below and on the opposite hill 3000 seats were filled by a mixed audience, behind whom again, among the pine-trees, sat several thousand more. As a final effort the conductor called upon every one to join in the National Anthem. Up rose 10,000 or 12,000 persons, and, as one man, they sang their patriotic verses beneath the blue canopy of heaven. It was wonderful; to a stranger the harmony of the whole was amazing; indeed, so successful did it prove, that national song after national song was sung by that musical audience. We looked on and marvelled. Music attracts in Finland, for from end to end of the land the people feel its power.

The sun blazed, the pine cones scented the air, the birds

GROUP OF RUNO BARDS

sang, and we felt transported back to old Druidical days when people met in the open for song and prayer. It was all very simple, but very delightful, and the people seemed to most thoroughly enjoy hearing their national airs; the whole scene again reminded us of Ober Ammergau, or of a Highland out-of-door Communion Service.

Alas! the Finnish national dress has almost disappeared, but at the *Sordavala* Festival a great attempt was made to revive it at the enormous open-air concerts in the public park, where some of the girls, lying or sitting under the pine-trees on the hill opposite listening to the choir singing, wore the dress of *Suomi*.

The national colours are red and yellow, or white and bright blue, and much dispute arises as to which is really right, for while the heraldry book says red and yellow, the country folk maintain blue and white. White loose blouses of fine Finnish flannel seemed most in favour, with a short full underskirt of the same material; geometrical embroidery about two inches wide in all colours and patterns being put round the hem of the short dress as well as brace fashion over the bodice; in some cases a very vivid shade of green, a sort of pinafore bodice with a large apron of the same colour falling in front, was noticeable; the embroidery in claret and dark green running round all the border lines; at the neck this embroidery was put on more thickly, and also at the waist belt. Round the apron hung a deep and handsome fringe; altogether the dress with its striking colours and tin or silver hangings was very pleasing. Unfortunately the girls seemed to think that even when they wore their national dress they ought to wear also a hat and gloves; although even the simplest hat spoils the effect.

At the back of the wood, where we wandered for a little shade and quiet rest, we found our dear friends the "*Runo* singers." The term originated from the ancient songs having been written down on sticks, the *Runo* writing being cut or burnt in, and was the bards only form of music. Now these strange musical memoranda can only be found in

museums. Our *Runo* singers, delighted with the success of the marriage-play they had coached, welcomed us warmly, and at once got up to shake hands as we paused to listen to their *kantele* playing and quaint chanting.

It may be well to mention that the Finnish language is very remarkable. Like Gaelic, it is musical, soft and dulcet, expressive and poetical, comes from a very old root, and is, in fact, one of the most interesting languages we possess. But some of the Finnish words are extremely long, in which respect they excel even the German. As a specimen of what a Finnish word can be, we may give *Opittomattomuudessansakin*, meaning, "Even in his ignorance."

The language is intensely difficult to learn, for it has sixteen cases, a fact sufficient to appal the stoutest heart. However, there is one good thing about Finnish, namely, that it is spoken absolutely phonetically, emphasis being invariably laid on the first syllable. For instance, the above word is pronounced (the "i" being spoken as "e") Op-e(i) tto-ma-tto-muu-des-san-sa-kin.

Finnish possesses a *you* and a *thou*, which fact, though it cannot lighten the difficulties, does away with the terrible third person invariably in use in Swedish, where people say calmly:

"Has the Herr Professor enjoyed his breakfast?"

"Yes, thanks, and I hope the Mrs. Authoress has done the same."

By the Swedish-speaking Finns it is considered the worst of ill-breeding for a younger person to address an elder as "you," or for strangers to speak to one another except in the manner above indicated.

Finnish is being spoken more and more in Finland. For instance, to-day 2,048,500 persons speak Finnish, and only 322,600 Swedish, as their mother tongue. Some 9000 (chiefly in the border provinces) talk Russian.

Finnish is one of the softest of tongues, and of all European languages most closely resembles the *Magyar* or Hungarian. Both of these come from the Ugrian stock of

Agglutinative languages, and therefore they always stick to the roots of the word, and make grammatical changes by suffixes. Vowels are employed so incessantly that the words are round and soft, and lend themselves easily to song. There are only nineteen letters in the Finnish alphabet, and as D F G are very seldom employed, even that number is greatly decreased. The use of vowels is endless; the dotted ö, equivalent to the French eu, being often followed by an e or i, and thereby rendered doubly soft.

Finns freely employ *thou* and *thee*, and add to these forms of endearment numerous suffixes. Human names, all animals, plants, metals, stones, trees—anything, in fact—can be used in the diminutive form.

Finnish is almost as difficult to learn as Chinese. Every noun has sixteen cases, and the suffixes alter so much, one hardly recognises the more complicated as the outcome of the original nominative. It takes, therefore, almost a lifetime to learn Finnish thoroughly, although the structure of their sentences is simple, and, being a nation little given to gush, adverbs and adjectives are seldom used.

As an example of Finnish, we give the following table made out at our request, so that we might learn a few sentences likely to prove useful when travelling in the less-frequented parts of the country—every letter is pronounced as written.

FINNISH.	ENGLISH.
Hyvää huomenta.	Good morning.
Hyvää iltaa.	Good evening.
Hyvää päivää.	Good day.
Hyvää yötä.	Good night.
Hyvästi.	Adieu.
Jumalan haltuun.	God be with you.
Kuinka voitte?	How are you?
Olkaa niin hyvä.	Be so kind.
Pyydän, or *olkaa niin hyvä.*	Please; yes, please.
Kiitoksia.	Thank you.
Kiitän.	I thank you.
Saisinko minä vuoteen.	I want a bed.
Saisinko minä yösijaa?	Can I stay the night?

FINNISH.	ENGLISH.
Saisinko luvan tietää mitarruokaa teillä on?	May I know what there is to eat?
Saisiko täällä ruokaa?	Can we get anything to eat?
Saisiko täällä juomaa?	Can we get anything to drink?
Paljako se maksaa? / *Mitä se maksaa?*	What does it cost?
Mitä olen velkaa?	What do I owe you?
Mitä olemme velkaa?	Are we in your debt?
Metahdommo lähteä (or *matkustaa*) *kello yksi.*	We would like to leave at one o'clock.
Milla tunnilla saavumme perille?	At what time will we arrive?
Kuinkakaukana se on?	How far is it?
Onko sinne pitkältä?	Is it far from here?
Olkaa hyvä tuokaa viela lihaa.	Please bring some more meat.
Kuulkaa?	Do you hear?
Heti.	Quick.

FINNISH.	ENGLISH.	FINNISH.	ENGLISH.
Maitoa.	Milk.	*Leipää.*	Bread.
Voita.	Butter.	*Kahvia.*	Coffee.
Sokeria.	Sugar.	*Kaloja.*	Fish.
Munia.	Eggs.	*Olutta*	Beer.

The foregoing are all in the objective case; in the nominative they would be:—

Liha, Maito, Leipä, Voi, Kahvi, Sokeri, Kala, Muna, Olut.

The numeration table is as follows:—

Yksi.	1.	*Kolme kymmentä.*	30.
Kaksi.	2.	*Neljä.*	40.
Kolme.	3.	*Viisi.*	50.
Neljä.	4.	*Sata.*	100.
Viisi.	5.	*Kaksisataa.*	200.
Kuusi.	6.	*Kolme.*	300.
Seitsemä.	7.	*Tuhat.*	1000.
Kahdeksan.	8.	*Kaksi tuhatta.*	2000.
Yhdeksän.	9.	*Kolme tuhatta.*	3000.
Kymmenen.	10.	*Miljoona.*	1,000,000.
Kaksikymmentä.	20.	*Tuhat kahdeksansataa yhdeksän kymmentä.*	1896.
Kaksikymmentä yksi.	21.		
Kaksikymmentä kaksi.	22.		

To show the difficulties of the declensions, we take, as an example, the ordinary word land.

Declensions of the word Maa = Land.

	Singularis.	Pluralis.
Nominativus.	maa.	maa-t.
Genetivus.	maa-n.	mai-den.
Ackusativus.	maa-n. / maa.	maa-t.
Instructivus.	maa-n.	mai-n.
Essivus.	maa-na.	mai-na.
Partitivus.	maa-ta.	mai-ta.
Translativus.	maa-ksi.	mai-ksi.
	Inner local cases.	
Inessivus.	maa-ssa.	mai-ssa.
Elativus.	maa-sta.	mai-sta.
Illativus.	maa-han.	mai-hin.
	Outer local cases.	
Adessivus.	maa-lla.	mai-lla.
Ablativus.	maa-lta.	mai-lta.
Allativus.	maa-lle.	mai-lle.
Abessivus.	maa-tta.	mai-tta.
Komitalivus.	mai-ne.	mai-ne.

Is such a declension not enough to strike terror to the stoutest heart?

But now to return to the *Kalevala* itself, which is said to be one of the grandest epic poems in existence. The word *Kalevala* means "Land of heroes," and it is undoubtedly a poem of nature-worship. It points to a contest between Light and Darkness, Good and Evil, and in this case the Light and Good are represented by the Finns, the Darkness and Evil by the Laps. Although it is a poem of nature-worship, full of most wonderful descriptions—some of the lines in praise of the moon and sun, the sea and water-ways, the rivers and hills, and the wondrous pine forests of Finland, are full of marvellous charm—it also tells the story of love, and many touching scenes are represented in its verses.

"It is unlike other epics," says E. Clodd, "in the absence of any apotheosis of clique or clan or dynasty, and in the theatre of action being in no ideal world where the gods sit lonely on Olympus, apart from men. Its songs have

"a common author, the whole Finnish people; the light of common day, more than that of the supernatural, illumines them."

Before going further, it may be well to mention how the *Kalevala* came into existence. Finland is thinly peopled, but every Finn is at heart musical and poetical; therefore, far removed from the civilised world, they made songs among themselves—fantastic descriptions of their own country. By word of mouth these poems were handed on from generation to generation, and generally sung to the accompaniment of the *kantele* in a weird sort of chant. By such means the wonderful *Sagas* of Iceland were preserved to us until the year 1270, when they first began to be written down on sheep-skins, in Runic writing, for Iceland at that date shone as a glorious literary light when all was gloom around. By means of tales, and poems, and chanted songs, the Arabian Nights stories, so dearly loved by the Arabs, which as yet have not been collected as they should have been, are related even to-day by the professional story-tellers we have seen in the market-places of Morocco.

Professor *Elias Lönnrot*, as mentioned in the last chapter, realising the value to scholars and antiquaries of the wonderful poems of Finland, so descriptive of the manners and customs of the Finns, set to work in the middle of this century to collect and bring them out in book form before they were totally forgotten. This was a tremendous undertaking; he travelled through the wildest parts of Finland; disguised as a peasant, he walked from village to village, from homestead to homestead, living the life of the people, and collecting, bit by bit, the poems of his country. As in all mythological or gipsy tales, he found many versions of the same subject, for naturally verses handed on orally change a little in different districts from generation to generation. But he was not to be beaten by this extra amount of work, and finally wove into a connected whole the substance of the wondrous tales he had heard

from the peasantry. This whole he called *Kalevala*, the name of the district where the heroes of the poem once existed.

In 1835 the first edition appeared. It contained thirty-two runos or cantos of about twelve thousand lines, and the second, which was published in 1849, contained fifty runos or about twenty-two thousand eight hundred lines (seven thousand more than the *Iliad*).

There is no doubt about it that the poems or verses were written at different times, but it is nearly all of pre-Christian origin, for, with the exception of a few prayers in the last pages, there are very few signs of Christian influence.

No one knows exactly how these poems originated. Indeed the *Kalevala* is unique among epics, although distinct traces of foreign influence may occasionally be found, the Christian influence being only noticeable in the last runos when the Virgin's Son, the Child Christ, appears, after which advent *Wäinämöinen* disappears for unknown lands. With this exception the entire poem is of much earlier date.

The last runo is truly remarkable.

"*Mariatta*, child of beauty," becomes wedded to a berry—

Like a cranberry in feature,
Like a strawberry in flavour.

. . . .

Wedded to the mountain berry

. . . .

Wedded only to his honour.

. . . .

I shall bear a noble hero,
I shall bear a son immortal,
Who will rule among the mighty
Rule the ancient *Wäinämöinen*,

. . .

In the stable is a manger,
Fitting birth-place for the hero.

. . .

Thereupon the horse, in pity,
Breathed the moisture of his nostrils,
On the body of the Virgin,

Wrapped her in a cloud of vapour,
Gave her warmth and needed comforts,
Gave his aid to the afflicted
To the virgin *Mariatta.*
There the babe was born and cradled,
Cradled in a woodland manger.

This shows Christian origin!

Wäinämöinen's place is gradually usurped by the "Wonder-babe," and the former departs in this stanza—

Thus the ancient *Wäinämöinen,*
In his copper-banded vessel
Left his tribe in *Kalevala,*
Sailing o'er the rolling billows,
Sailing through the azure vapours,
Sailing through the dusk of evening,
Sailing to the fiery sunset,
To the higher landed regions,
To the lower verge of heaven;
Quickly gained the far horizon,
Gained the purple-coloured harbour,
There his bark he firmly anchored
Rested in his boat of copper;
But he left his harp of magic,
Left his songs and wisdom sayings
To the lasting joy of *Suomi.*

Thus old *Wäinämöinen* sails away into unfathomable depths.

The *Kalevala* has, up to the present time, been a much-neglected poem, but there is now an excellent English translation by Martin Crawford, an American by birth, from which we take the liberty of quoting. Mr. Andrew Lang has charmingly discoursed on the great national poem of the Finns, and Mr. Edward Clodd, who wrote a delightful series of articles in *Knowledge* on the same subject, has kindly placed his notes in our hands.

There is no doubt about it that the fantastic mythology of the Finns has not received as much attention as it deserves. "Although mythology and theology are one," says Mr. Clodd, "we find among the ancient Finns the

worship of natural objects, all living things being credited with life, and all their relations being regarded as the actions of the mighty powers."

Naturally in a country so undisturbed and isolated as Finland, fantastic mythology took firm root, and we certainly find the most romantic and weird verses in connection with the chief heroes of the *Kalevala*, namely, *Wäinämöinen* and *Ilmarinen*, who broadly resemble the Norse demigods Odin and Thor.

After any one has been to Finland, he reads the *Kalevala* with amazement. What pen could describe more faithfully the ways of the people? Every line is pregnant with life. Their food, their clothing, their manners and customs, their thoughts and characteristics are all vividly drawn, as they were hundreds of years ago, and as they remain to-day!

It is only when we peep into the mysteries of the *Kalevala* and see how trees are sacred, how animals are mythological, as, for instance, in the forty-sixth rune, which speaks of the bear who "was born in lands between sun and moon, and died not by man's deeds, but by his own will." Indeed the wolf, the horse, the duck, and all animals find their place in this wondrous *Kalevala;* and dream stories are woven round each creature till the whole life of Finland has become impregnated by a fantastic sort of romance.

The *Kalevala* opens with a creation myth of the earth, sea, and sky from an egg, but instead of the heroes living in some supernatural home of their own, they come down from heaven, distribute gifts among men, and work their wonders by aid of magic, at the same time living with the people, and entering into their daily toils.

It is strange that the self-developing egg should occur in the *Kalevala* of Northern Europe, for it also appears among the Hindoos and other Eastern peoples, pointing again to the Mongolian origin of the Finnish people.

The way the life of the people is depicted seems simply marvellous, and the description holds good even at the pre-

sent time. For instance, these lines taken at hazard speak of spinning, etc.—

Many beauteous things the maiden,
With the spindle has accomplished,
Spun and woven with her fingers;
Dresses of the finest texture
She in winter has upfolded,
Bleached them in the days of spring-time,
Dried them at the hour of noonday,
For our couches finest linen,
For our heads the softest pillows,
For our comfort woollen blankets.

Or, again, speaking of the bride's home, it likens the father-in-law to her father, and describes the way they all live together in Finland even to-day, and bids her accept the new family as her own—

Learn to labour with thy kindred;
Good the home for thee to dwell in,
Good enough for bride and daughter.
At thy hand will rest the milk-pail,
And the churn awaits thine order;
It is well here for the maiden,
Happy will the young bride labour,
Easy are the resting branches;
Here the host is like thy father,
Like thy mother is the hostess,
All the sons are like thy brothers,
Like thy sisters are the daughters.

Here is another touch—the shoes made from the birch bark, so commonly in use even at the present time; and, again, the bread made from bark in times of famine has ever been the Finnish peasant's food—

Even sing the lads of Lapland
In their straw-shoes filled with joyance,
Drinking but a cup of water,
Eating but the bitter tan bark.

These my dear old father sang me
When at work with knife or hatchet;

These my tender mother taught me
When she twirled the flying spindle,
When a child upon the matting
By her feet I rolled and tumbled.

To-day, as we said, Finnish women still wash in the streams, and they beat their clothes upon the rocks just as they did hundreds, one might say thousands, of years ago and more—for the greater part of *Kalevala* was most undoubtedly written long before the Christian era.

Northlands fair and slender maiden
Washing on the shore a head-dress,
Beating on the rocks her garments,
Rinsing there her silken raiment.

In the following rune we find an excellent description of the land, and even a line showing that in those remote days trees were burned down to clear the land, the ashes remaining for manure—a common practice now.

Groves arose in varied beauty,
Beautifully grew the forests,
And again, the vines and flowers.
Birds again sang in the tree-tops,
Noisily the merry thrushes,
And the cuckoos in the birch-trees ;
On the mountains grew the berries,
Golden flowers in the meadows,
And the herbs of many colours,
Many kinds of vegetation ;
But the barley is not growing.

Osma's barley will not flourish,
Not the barley of *Wainola*,
If the soil be not made ready,
If the forest be not levelled,
And the branches burned to ashes.

Only left the birch-tree standing
For the birds a place of resting,
Where might sing the sweet-voiced cuckoo
Sacred bird in sacred branches.

One could go on quoting passages from this strange epic —but suffice it to say that in the forty-sixth rune, *Wäinämöinen* speaks to *Otso*, the bear—

Otso, thou my well beloved,
Honey eater of the woodlands,
Let not anger swell thy bosom.

Otso was not born a beggar,
Was not born among the rushes,
Was not cradled in a manger;
Honey-paw was born in ether
In the regions of the Moonland.

With the chains of gold she bound it
To the pine-tree's topmost branches.
There she rocked the thing of magic,
Rocked to life the tender baby,
'Mid the blossoms of the pine-tree,
On the fir-top set with needles;
Thus the young bear well was nurtured.

Sacred *Otso* grew and flourished,
Quickly grew with graceful movements,
Short of feet, with crooked ankles,
Wide of mouth and broad of forehead,
Short his nose, his fur robe velvet;
But his claws were not well fashioned,
Neither were his teeth implanted.

Swore the bear a sacred promise
That he would not harm the worthy,
Never do a deed of evil.
Then *Mielikki*, woodland hostess,
Wisest maid of *Tapiola*,
Sought for teeth and claws to give him,
From the stoutest mountain-ashes,
From the juniper and oak-tree,
From the dry knots of the alder.
Teeth and claws of these were worthless,
Would not render goodly service.
Grew a fir-tree on the mountain,
Grew a stately pine in Northland,
And the fir had silver branches,
Bearing golden cones abundant;
These the sylvan maiden gathered,
Teeth and claws of these she fashioned,
In the jaws and feet of *Otso*
Set them for the best of uses.

Taught him how to walk a hero.

He freely gave his life to others.

These are only a few stanzas taken hap-hazard from *Kalevala*, but they give some idea of its power.

At the Festival we met, among the *Runo* performers, a delightful woman. About forty, fat and broad, she had a cheerful countenance and kindly eyes, and she sang—if such dirges could be called singing—old Finnish songs, all of which seemingly lacked an end! She was absolutely charming, however, perfectly natural and unaffected, and when we got her in a corner, away from the audience, proved even more captivating than before the public.

First she sang a cradle song, and, as she moaned out the strange music, she patted her foot up and down and swayed her body to and fro, as though she were nursing a baby. She was simply frank too, and when asked to sing one particular song exclaimed—

"Oh yes, I can sing that beautifully; I sing it better than any one on the East Coast of Finland."

Abundant tears shed for no sufficient cause—for no cause at all, indeed—would seem to be a characteristic of these lady vocalists.

The singer of the bear legend wore a beautiful red-brocaded cap. In fact, her attire was altogether remarkable; her skirt, a pretty shade of purple shot with gold silk, was cut in such a way as to form a sort of corset bodice with braces across the shoulders, under which she wore a white chemisette. A beautiful, rich, red silk apron, and a set of well-chosen coloured scarves drawn across the breast completed her costume and added to the fantastic colouring and picturesqueness of the whole. She was very friendly; again and again she shook hands with us all in turn, and, during one of the most mournful of her songs, she sat so close to me that her elbow rested in my lap, while real tears coursed down her cheeks. It was quite touching to witness the emotion of the woman; she rocked herself to and fro, and mopped her eyes with a neatly folded white cotton handkerchief, the while she seemed totally oblivious of our presence and enwrapped in her music. When she had

finished she wiped away her tears, and then, as if suddenly recalled from another world, she appeared to realise the fact that we were present, and, overcome with grief, she apologised most abjectly for having forgotten herself so far as to cry before the strange ladies! This was no affectation; the woman was downrightly sorry, and it was not until we had patted her fondly and smiled our best thanks that she could be pacified at all and believe we were not offended.

In her calmer moments she drew, as we thought, a wonderful purse from under her apron—a cloth embroidered thing with beads upon it. Great was our surprise to discover that it contained snuff, from which she helped herself at intervals during the entertainment, never omitting to offer us some before she took her own pinch.

This unexpected generosity reminded us of an incident that occurred while crossing the Grosser Glockner mountain in Tyrol, when we were overtaken by a violent snowstorm. Being above the snow line the cold and wind were intense. One of the guides, feeling sorry for us and evidently thinking we looked blue with cold, produced from his *rucksack* a large flask which contained his dearly loved schnapps. He unscrewed the cork and gravely offered it to us, each in turn. There was no glass, nor did he even attempt to wipe the rim, although but an hour before we had seen all the guides drinking from the same bottle.

This equality of class is always to be found in lands where civilisation has not stepped in. "Each man is as good as his neighbour" is a motto in the remote parts of Finland, as it is in the Bavarian Highlands and other less-known parts. What the peasants have, they give freely; their goodness of heart and thoughtfulness are remarkable.

The *Runo* woman, who wept so unrestrainedly, had most beautiful teeth, and her smile added a particular charm to her face. When she was not singing she busied herself with spinning flax on the usual wooden oar, about five feet long and much carved and ornamented at one end. On the top, at the opposite end, was a small flat piece like another

oar blade, only broader and shorter, fixed at such an angle that when she sat upon it the carved piece stood up slantwise beside her. Half-way up the blade some coloured cotton bands secured a bundle of flax, while in her hand she held a bobbin on to which she wove the thread.

She was never idle, for, when not occupied in singing to us, she spent her time spinning, always repeating, however, the second line of the other performers.

Another woman danced with her head bent low, a very strange slow shuffle round and round, something like an Arab measure, but after a while she broke into a sort of waltz. The dancing, like the *Runo* music, was primitive.

These *Runo* singers could but be regarded as a connecting link between the present and the past.

Here were the very people, the representatives of generations gone before, who had handed down by word of mouth the runes of that wonderful epic, the *Kalevala*. Just such folk as these had sat during long winters in their small wooden huts, practically windowless (for a glass window was unknown in Finland till thirty years ago), because it was generally too cold to put back the wooden shutter for more than a few moments at a time; they had sat in the dusk chanting the songs of their land, the mystic verses of which they had sucked in almost with their mother's milk, until music and verse filled their very souls. The weird, the wild, the fantastic, had become their nature. The mind loves to dwell on the supernatural, the unreal; and in those lonely, dreary, darkened lives mythological legends flourished as mushrooms in a cellar. The population literally feasted on the mythical. As the women applied the scrutcher to the flax, or carded the wool, they dreamed wild dreams of ghosts and goblins, and repeated to themselves, in queer chant, the stories of the sacred bear, or those beautiful lines to the sun and the moon to be found in *Kalevala*. They lived again with *Ahti*, the Finnish sea god, otherwise called *Lemminkäinen;* or the husband invoked the aid of charms, as at his work he recited how *Lemminkäinen* reached *Pohjola* but to quarrel and fight,

and related verses showing how he finally cut off the head of the representative champion of the beautiful *Louhi*. Or wild stories of an ox with a thousand heads engrossed their fancy, and they lingered fondly over the tales of the hundred horns to plough up the land. Or, again, the old wife would chime in with the weird rune where *Wäinämöinen's* harp blew into the sea, when a boat was manned with a thousand oars to fetch it back, but *Wäinämöinen* destroyed that boat by means of magic.

Louhi then changed herself into an eagle, with claws and scythes of iron, and wondrous breastplate, while on her wings she bore aloft a thousand armed men, and upon her tail sat a hundred archers, and ten upon every feather.

> With one wing she sweeps the heavens
> While the other sweeps the waters.

This is cleverly represented in a picture by *Gallén*, a well-known Finnish artist.

In another stirring verse, the poem goes on to tell how *Louhi* swooped down upon the heroes, when desperate battle ensued for the treasure under dispute.

Wounded and exhausted, *Louhi* threw the treasure into the sea rather than surrender it.

How Finnish!

BUILDING A KUIRN

CHAPTER VII

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

SUCH are the manners and customs of the past; now let us take a look at the *Suomi* of to-day, that we may better understand the life of the people before we start on our trip in carts through the interior of that enchanting but far-away land.

For some hundreds of years Finland belonged to Sweden, and the stamp of Sweden is to be found on its inhabitants; especially among the aristocracy, who still speak that language in their homes. But in 1808 Russia stepped across the frontier, seized Finland, annexed it as her own, and a year later the King of Sweden renounced all his claims.

Considering that Russia conquered Finland she has been very generous, but, unhappily, she does not even understand the language of the people she governs, knows nothing of them or their ways, and, more than that, does not even worship in the same church.

It was because the Finlanders behaved so well that the Tzar conceded much, and left them their independent constitution and their Lutheran Church. The Tzar is really the Grand Duke of Finland, which is ruled by a Governor-General, by the Imperial Finnish Senate, and by a Diet composed of four Houses—the Nobles, the Clergy, the Burghers, and the Peasants. The members of Parliament meet every third year, and have the power of voting money, altering the constitutional laws of the country, and regulating commercial enterprise. But the Church has the

final decision in the Court of Appeal in both criminal and civil cases.

Thirty years ago came the renaissance of Finland. Art, literature, industry, commerce, and politics suddenly revived. The repose of centuries was ended, and the people saw themselves once more a nation conscious of its own gigantic tenacity of soul, prompted with a knowledge of its destiny, though sneered at, and threatened on all sides by famine, contempt, and absorption. Finland is like a man who has slept long and suddenly wakes up refreshed, with renewed vigour to work. That is why it has come so much forward in the last quarter of the century, and is now prepared to make gigantic strides. Learned, artistic, commercial, and athletic societies sprang up, each embued with a fresh and sincere national enthusiasm. Tournaments were held for *skï*, rifle-shooting, yachting, and other sports. Attention was called to the ancient songs and national music, and the great musical festivals, such as was held at *Sordavala* in 1896, were reinstated.

Parliament began meeting regularly, and hope beamed brightly. Nevertheless danger is lurking within and without, for the Finlanders speak three languages, and are therefore, as a nation, somewhat divided, while the great Russian people are ready to overwhelm and absorb, and march over them to new fields. Still, as a Finlander truly said to the writer, "The destiny of a people is in the hands of the Lord our King, and Finland has courage in God"; and therefore it is possible a great future may be in store for that beautiful country, beautiful whether we peep at *Tavasland, Karelen, Österbotten* or *Pohjola.*

The people in *Tavasland* are fair-haired, slow, but exceedingly tenacious, and also somewhat boorish. Here the principal towns, manufactures, etc., are to be found. Many of the inhabitants speak Swedish, and all have been influenced by Sweden.

The following little anecdote gives some idea of the character of the natives of *Tavasland*:—

A fortress was besieged by the Russians in 1808. After a severe struggle it was at last taken by assault, when the Russians discovered that fifty-five out of the sixty defenders were dead. *But none had yielded!*

The people are determined and persevering, and it is no uncommon thing for a lad to follow the plough until he is thirteen years of age, reading for his school and his university, and finally taking his M.A. degree, and even becoming a Professor.

The people of the *Karelen* district are quicker and of lighter heart. They are nearer to Russia, and the Russian influence is distinctly seen. They are not so cleanly or so highly educated as the rest of the country, but they are musical and artistic.

Lastly, *Pohjola*, the "Country of Hades," as the name means, is perhaps the home of the genuine Finn. The inhabitants have much darker hair and eyes, are small in stature, dress picturesquely with a collection of knives and hatchets at their belt, are go-ahead and resolute.

One must remember the word Finn implies native peasant; the upper classes are called Finlanders; and while the Finn speaks only Finnish, the Finlander only knew Swedish until quite lately, except what he was pleased to call "Kitchen Finnish," for use amongst his servants; but every year the Finlander is learning more and more of his native language, and Swedish bids fair to be relegated to the classics as far as Finland is concerned.

Language to a great extent governs the two great political parties. The *Fennomans* want Finland for the Finns as regards language and everything else;—while the *Svecomans* are composed of the old Swedish families, who declare Sweden has done everything in literature, politics, culture, etc., and, in gratitude to Sweden, Finland should stick to that tongue and that literature.

Party strife is terrible. It would be far better if the *Fennomans* and *Svecomans* tried to remember that their real object is the same, namely, the welfare of their own country,

and turned their attention only in that direction instead of to petty and often ridiculous political squabblings.

It is wonderful to note how democratic the people are in Finland. Each peasant is a gentleman at heart, brave, hasty, independent, and he expects every one to treat him as his equal.

Very few persons are rich in Finland according to English lights, but many are very comfortably off. It would be almost impossible there to live beyond one's income, or to pretend to have more than is really the case, for when the returns are sent in for the income tax, the income of each individual is published. In January every year, in the *Helsingfors* newspapers, rows and rows of names appear, and opposite them the exact income of the owner. This does not apply if the returns are less than £200 a year; but, otherwise, every one knows and openly discusses what every one else has.

Very amusing to a stranger, but horrible for the persons concerned. Fancy Jones saying to Brown, "Well, old chap, as you have £800 a year, I think you could afford a better house and occasionally a new suit of clothes;" and even if he didn't make such a remark, feeling he thought it!

It is the fashion for each town to select a committee in December for the purpose of taxing the people. Every one is taxed. The tax is called a *skatt-öre*, the word originating from the small coin of that name, and each town decides whether the *öre* shall be charged on 200 or 400 marks, according to the wealth or requirements of the town for that year. Let us take as an example a 400 mark *öre* (tax). The first 4000 marks are free; but payment is required on every further 400, and so on. For instance, if a man has 16,000 marks, he pays nothing on the first 4000, and has therefore thirty sets of 400 to pay for, which is called thirty *skatt-öre*. If overtaxed, the aggrieved person can complain to a second committee, and this sometimes happens. The tax varies very much; in some of the seaport towns, which receive heavy dues, the *öre*, which includes parochial

rates, is very low. In *Wiborg* they have had to pay as much as 15 marks on every 400; but as a rule it is less.

The habit of publishing the returns of all the incomes began about ten or fifteen years ago, and is now a subject of much annoyance—as much annoyance to a Finlander as the habit of never knocking at the door to a stranger. No one ever thinks of knocking at a door in Finland. People simply march in, and as few doors possess bolts, the consequences are sometimes appalling, especially to English people, who go through more daily ablutions than most nations, and prefer to do them in private. During our visit to *Sordavala*, for the Musical Festival, we had some curious experiences in connection with boltless doors. We were located at the brewer's. Now this was a great favour, as he was a private individual who cheerfully gave up his beautiful salon upholstered in red velvet "to the English ladies," but, unfortunately, this sumptuous apartment was reached by a smaller chamber where a man had to sleep. Not only that, but the sleeping apartment of the man was little more than a passage which conducted directly into the *Konttoori* or office of the brewery. As far as the man was concerned, this did not so much matter; eventually he got quite accustomed to hearing his door suddenly opened and seeing a stranger with an empty basket on his arm standing before him and demanding the way to the *Konttoori* (which is pronounced, by the bye, exactly in the same manner as an Irishman says *country*), when with a wave of the hand he indicated the office. But for us it was different. One morning, in the early stage of dressing, our door opened, and a fat burly man dashed into the middle of our room, where he stood transfixed, as well he might.

"Go away," we exclaimed. He heeded not. We waved and indicated, with the help of a stocking, our desire that he should leave our apartment. But the stolidity of a Finn is always remarkable, and the appearance of strange Englishwomen in somewhat unusual attire appeared really to fascinate the gentleman, who neither moved nor spoke, only simply

stared. "Go away," we repeated, gesticulating more violently than before. The situation was intensely awkward, and it seemed to us as though hours instead of moments had passed since the entrance of our burly friend, and we were just wondering how on earth we were to get rid of him, when slowly, as though rolling the letters round his mouth, he pronounced the word *Konttoori.*

"Yes, go into the country," we answered, pointing vehemently in the direction of that oft-inquired-for office. Very solemnly and quietly he turned round and marched out of the door—let us hope much impressed and less disconcerted by the interview than we had been. Once we were rid of him, we sat down and laughed so immoderately over the scene that the *bed,* one of those wooden collapsable affairs, peculiar to the country, on which my sister was sitting, completely gave way, and she was deposited upon the floor. The peals of merriment that followed this second misadventure apparently aroused the interest of some other visitor outside, for again the door opened and a youth of about seventeen stood before us. This was really getting too much of a good thing, for what may be considered a joke once becomes distressing if repeated a second time, and absolutely appalling on a third occasion.

However, as we could not understand him, and he could not understand us, we wished him good-morning, and gently waved him away. Eleven times in the course of five days did odd men and women thus rush like avalanches into our room, all having mistaken the way to the *Konttoori.*

Another peculiarity of the Finlander is that he never shakes hands. He seizes one's digits as though they were a pump handle, and warmly holds them, wrestles with them, waggles them, until the unsuspecting Britisher wonders if he will ever again be able to claim his hand as his own. In this way the gentleman from the Russian Grand Duchy is demonstrative with his acquaintances; he is very publicly devoted also to his wife, fondling her before his friends. On the other hand, he seldom kisses his mother, and never his

sisters. Indeed, all the outward affection seems reserved for husbands and wives; daughters seldom kiss their parents, and brothers and sisters rarely even shake hands. This struck us as particularly strange, because the members of an English family generally greet one another warmly when meeting for breakfast, especially parents and children; yet in Finland, as a rule, they hardly take any notice of one another. A certain son we knew kissed his mother's hand on the occasion of leaving her for some weeks, while he merely nodded to his brothers and sisters standing around.

Another strange freak, in a land where there is no night for two or three months, is that they never have shutters, and seldom blinds, at the windows; therefore the sun streams in undisturbed; and when a room has four windows, as happened to us at *Sordavala*, the light of day becomes a positive nuisance, and a few green calico blinds an absolute godsend; indeed, almost as essential as the ammonia bottle for gnat bites, or the mosquito head-nets, if one sleeps with open windows.

It is indeed a strange experience to sleep with one's head in a sort of meat safe, for that is what these unsightly green muslin bags called mosquito nets resemble! They are flat on the top, with a sort of curtain hanging down all round, which one ties neatly under one's chin before retiring to rest. Behold a beautiful lady,—for all ladies are as certain to be beautiful when they write about themselves, as that authoresses are all old and ugly, which seems to be a universal idea in the eyes of the public generally,—behold then a beautiful lady enveloped in a large unwieldy and very wobbly net head-covering, of such a vivid green hue that the unfortunate wearer looks jaundiced beneath! Well, they had one advantage, they saved some bites, and they afforded us much amusement; but becoming they were not.

In our strange chamber, with its four windows only protected by white muslin blinds from the fierce glare of that inquisitive sun, that seemed to peer in upon our movements all day and all night, we endured a small martyrdom,

till we begged the maid to make our beds the reverse way; that is, to put the pillows where one's feet are usually to be found, as by this means the wooden bedstead kept a little of the light out of our weary eyes. We stayed with our kind friends at *Sordavala* for some days, and were a great source of interest to the servant, who, one day screwing up her courage, curiosity having got the better of her shyness, thus addressed a person she thought could furnish the required information—

"Is it part of the English ladies' religion to sleep the wrong way round?"

"No," was the reply; "what do you mean?"

"Is it in their worship that they should sleep with their heads towards the sun?"

"Certainly not; how did such an idea get into your head?"

"Every night the English ladies have made me make their beds the wrong way round, and I thought perhaps it was one of their religious customs."

We were much amused when this conversation was repeated to us. Such a notion as keeping the sun out of one's eyes had never entered the girl's head! Apparently Finlanders cannot have too much sunlight; probably by way of contrast to the darkness they live in during the long winter, for be it remembered that in the North, where we travelled later, the sun disappears altogether in December and January, and winter every year lasts for eight or nine months.

We were surprised to find that every basin is left by the housemaid with cold water in it, and there it stands waiting at all seasons; but such a thing as warm water is considered positively remarkable, and the servant generally looks as if she would fall down with amazement at the mention of such a strange thing being wanted.

In quite a large hotel at which we were once staying, the landlord being the only person who could speak anything except Finnish, we asked him at night if he would be so kind as to explain to the housemaid that we wished to be

called at half-past seven the following morning, when we should like her to bring us hot water.

"Certainement, Madame," he replied, and bowing low took his leave.

After a few minutes we heard a knock at the door (the door actually possessed a bolt or he would not have knocked), and on opening it we found the landlord.

"Pardon, Madame, but do you want the hot water to drink?"

"No, no," we answered; "to wash with."

He looked amazed; evidently he was more accustomed to people drinking tumblers of hot water—a somewhat rare occurrence at half-past seven in the morning anywhere, we should have thought—than he was to our requiring it for washing purposes.

Finland has much to learn in the way of sanitation, and even more as to the advisability of a good daily bath, for while even in hotels they give one an enormous carafe, which might be called a giraffe, its neck is so long, filled with drinking water surrounded by endless tumblers, the basin is scarcely bigger than a sugar bowl, while the jug is about the size of a cream ewer.

Very, very tired one night we arrived at a little inn. The beds were not made and, knowing how long it took a Finn to accomplish anything of the kind, we begged her to be as quick as possible, as we were dead beat. She pulled out the wooden bed, she thumped the mattress, and at last she went away, we hoped and believed to fetch the sheets. She remained absent for some time, but when she returned it was not with the sheets; it was with what to her mind was far more important, viz. a tin tray on which were arranged *four glass tumblers and a huge glass bottle full of fresh water*, which she had been to the bottom of the garden to pump from a deep well!

We often pondered over that water subject, and wondered whether Finns had nightly carousals with the innocent bottle, or whether drinking *aqua pura* is a part of their

religion, as the housemaid had thought sleeping with our heads the wrong way was a part of ours!

Our minds were greatly exercised also as to why the pillows were so hard and often gave forth such a strange smell, but that mystery was one day solved. When driving along a pretty road, we saw masses of soft white cotton flower waving in the wind, the silvery sheen catching the sunlight and making it look like fluffy snow. This we were told was *luikku*, the Latin name of which is *Eriophorum angustifolium*. Women were gathering it and packing it into a sack.

"That," explained our Finnish friend, "is used for stuffing the pillows and sometimes even beds."

"Really?" we returned; "then that is why they are so hard and lumpy."

"Oh, but there is another plant even less soft than the *luikku*, which is employed for the same purpose. It grows at the water's edge and is a kind of rush."

This plant turned out to be *ruoko* (*Phragmites communis*), a very common species of water shrub in Finland; after its dark red flowers have turned silvery gray, they look very beautiful swaying with the wind, the long reed-like leaves making a pretty swish at the water's edge as they bend. Going up the canals it is quite strange to notice how, when the steamer sucks the water down from the sides to her screw, the *ruoko* sways and bows its head down to her, and, as she passes on, it lifts its majestic head again, and gently sways down the other side as though to bid the ship farewell.

In the summer months, when things very often have to be done in a hurry, getting in the hay or reaping the harvest, for instance, since the moment the weather is propitious and the crop ripe no time must be lost, or a night's frost may prove destructive to all the crops, it is very common to have a *talkko*.

A *talkko* is a sort of popular amusement at which a great deal of work is done. The farmer invites all his friends to help him clear a rye field, for example. They all come in eager haste, and generally have a sort of picnic.

Work proceeds much quicker in company than alone, and while they reap with old-fashioned sickles, they chat and laugh and sing their national songs, eat and make merry on small beer, that terrible concoction called *Kalja*, which they drink out of a *haarikka* or beer bucket.

The corn and rye when cut is put on pine-tree trunks to dry. They saw down the small pines, chop off the branch a foot from the trunk, plant them in a line along the field, and loosely throw their crop over these stumps exposed to the sun and wind; then, after binding by hand, carry them on sledges to the farmstead, where thrashing, also by hand, completes the business of harvesting.

Farm work is very primitive in Finland; the small plough, behind which the native plods, guiding it in and out of the stones, which his small sturdy pony drags, is a long and tedious business.

A *talkko* relieves labour much; and thus it comes to pass that, after Jones and party have helped Smith on Monday, Smith and party help Jones on Tuesday; a very socialistic arrangement, like many others in *Suomi*.

From the poor the rich have taken a hint, and where, in England, we have work parties for bazaars, or to make garments for the village clubs, in Finland they have a *talkko*. Especially is this the custom just before Christmas time, when many presents have to be got ready, and all the girl friends assemble and prepare their little gifts for distribution on Christmas Eve. On this night there is much festivity. A tree is lighted even in the poorest homes, and presents are exchanged amid much feasting and merriment.

Christmas comes in the winter, when snow and ice are everywhere; therefore the richer folk drive to their balls and parties in sledges, rolled up in furs, and big skating-parties are the order of the day.

It is amusing at these gatherings to hear the young people all calling one another by their Christian names, and as some of the real Finnish names are musical and pretty, we give a few of the most usual—

MEN.	WOMEN.	SURNAMES.
Onni	Aino	Aaltola
Ilmari	Saima	Vuorio
Yrjö (George)	Helmi	Lallukka
Väinö	Aili	Ritola
Armas	Kyllikki	Aitamurto
Aarne	Eine	Haapaoja
Arvo	Aura	Häkli
Reijo	Sirkka	Sutinen
Esko	Lempi	Pösö
Heikki (Henry)	Siviä	Matikainen
Urpo	Rauha (Friede, Trene)	Koskinen
Eero	Hellin	Piispanen
Mauno	Ainikki (Kalevala)	Pilvi (a cloud)
Lauri	Ilpotar „	Vitikka
Vilho (William)	Inkeri „	Vipunen (Kalevala)
Toivo	Louhi „	Korhonen
Pekka (Peter)	Lyyli, or Lyylikki	Lyytikäinen
Ahti (Kalevala)	Mielikki (Kalevala)	Päivärinta
Sampsa „	Tellervo „	Päiviö
Antero „	Tuulikki „	Makkonen
Youko „	Hilja	Porkka
Kullervo „	Tyyne	Rahkonen
Kalervo „	Suoma	Ojanen
Untamo „	Alli	Reijonen
Kammo „	Impi	Alkio
Nyyrikki „	Laina	Jeittinen
Osmo „	Ilma	
Valio	Iri	
Ensi		

Winter in the South of Finland generally sets in about the last week of November, and when it comes is usually very severe, while the nights are long and the days short. As a rule the air is dry, and therefore that delightful fresh crispness, which is so invigorating, prevails, as it does in Norway, where, one day when we were with Dr. Nansen at Lysaker, the thermometer registered 9° below zero Fahr., yet we found it far less cold than England on a mild damp day.

The mean temperature of the North of Finland is 27° Fahr., and round *Helsingfors* in the South 38° Fahr.

As November advances every one in the Southern districts looks forward eagerly to black ice; that is to say,

that the ice should form before the first fall of snow covers the land. This often happens, and then the lakes, the rivers, and all round the coast, rapidly freeze some inches thick, the surface being as flat as a looking-glass, unless the wind has seriously disturbed the ice much while forming, and Finland becomes one enormous skating-rink from end to end. Every one throughout the country skates—men, women, and children. Out they come in the early morning, and, with some refreshments in their pockets, they accomplish visits and journeys which, to the uninitiated, seem impossible. Fifty or sixty miles a day can be managed on skates, and even the peasantry avail themselves of this opportunity of enjoying sport, and, at the same time, accomplishing a vast amount of friendly visiting and work. It is during this black ice that the ice-boats are most in requisition; for the bumpiness so often experienced when snow has settled on the frozen surface does not exist, and the speed, which is tremendous at all times, becomes absolutely terrific, as we know from our experiences in Holland, already described in the *Badminton Magazine*.

However, Finland is not always so fortunate, and sometimes the frost and snow come together; and then, although the peasantry, as in Holland, skate over the waterways to market and on business, the better-class folk, who skate for amusement, betake them to rinks. These rinks on the sea are sawn all round as soon as the ice is formed, so that they become floating islands. They are separated from the land, and no matter how severe the frost, or how great the storms, they can be kept in order.

Roadways are marked out on the ice in Finland the same as in Norway; that is to say, little holes are dug along the would-be path into which small fir-trees are stuck, and therefore these impromptu roads look like little avenues. The rink is generally joined to the mainland, and to strengthen it water is poured on the path until it freezes, when more is added, by which means quite a raised bridge is formed. In the case of the rink,

the fir-trees are planted all round the edge in a veritable wall, to keep out the non-paying public. Bands play in the afternoon and evening, and when it becomes too dark to see by nature's light, electric lamps are kindled, and the place becomes a regular rendezvous, not only for skaters, but for on-lookers, who walk about on those bright starlight evenings, chatting to their friends, sipping their coffee, and listening to the music.

As a rule, in Finland they go in more for distance than figure-skating, as is also the case in Holland, Norway, etc., where long distances have to be traversed, and speed is of more importance than style. Still, in the Finnish towns, where people skate on rinks merely for amusement, some beautiful figure-skating may be seen.

Not long ago a Finnish lady went over to Paris and received the sum of £120 a month for giving entertainments in figure-skating. All Paris was charmed, and Finland naturally felt proud!

Sledging, of course, is everywhere necessary in Finland in the winter, and only those who have enjoyed the delights of a drive, with a good horse briskly passing through the crisp air to the tingling of sleigh bells, can realise its delights.

Skidåkning is also much in vogue, but in Finland it is not so dangerous as in more mountainous countries. In Norway *ski* are absolutely essential. There the snow lies so deep on the mountains and in the valleys that the peasantry could never get about at all were it not for their *ski*. But in Finland the country is so much flatter, and the lakes so much more numerous, that people can walk on the hard-frozen surface readily. Therefore the peasantry—except in certain districts—do not use *ski* so much as a necessity, as for pleasure and sport. The upper classes go on *skidor* as constantly as they skate. They get up competitions; they go for whole days expeditions into the country, and, on their "wooden shoon," enjoy themselves thoroughly in the winter months.

In a *Winter Jaunt to Norway*, I described a jump of 88 feet made on these strange snow-shoes, and the *ski* themselves, as follows:—

It is perhaps a bold statement to call *ski*-racing one of the finest sports of the world, but to our mind it undoubtedly is, and one which requires wondrous pluck and skill, and for a man to jump 88 feet from a height, with a pair of *ski* securely fixed on his feet, requires some courage!

They are utterly unlike Canadian snow-shoes, because they are required for a very hilly country, and over a great depth of snow. An ordinary-sized man's *ski* are 8 or 9 feet long. They are only about 4½ inches wide, and an inch at the thickest part, that is to say, immediately under the foot, but towards either end they taper to half this thickness. As a rule they are both the same length, and pointed upwards at the toes; but in some of the Norwegian valleys and in Finland, one *ski* is much longer than the other, and that one is usually quite flat.

In the middle of this plank-like piece of wood, which is split with the grain to stand the great strain often imposed upon it, and never sawn at all, the toes are fastened by a leather strap. Another strap goes round the heel in a sort of loop fashion, securing the foot, but at the same time giving the heel full play. A special *ski* boot is worn over enormously thick horsehair stockings. This boot has no hard sole at all, and, instead of being sewn at the sides, the large piece of thick leather which goes under the foot is brought well over the top and secured to what might ordinarily be called a leather tongue. At the back of the boot is a small strap, which is used to fasten the *ski* heel-strap securely to the boot. Once fixed on the *ski*, the foot is so secure no fall can loosen it, and the only way to extricate the foot is to undo the three straps. Outside these huge ungainly hair stockings and strangely comfortable boots very thick gaiters are worn. It is very necessary to keep the feet and legs warm in such a cold land as Norway, where the mercury freezes ofttimes in the thermometers, and snow 6 or 7 feet deep covers the land sometimes for months. Such cold sounds appalling, but it is quite the reverse. The air is absolutely dry, and there is seldom any wind.

At the given word, No. 1 rushed from the plateau on the hilltop, down the hill itself. The pace, in consequence of the steepness, was tremendous. On he came; on to the little platform built out from the mountain-side he rushed; then, with a huge spring, his legs doubled up, and whirling his arms like a windmill to keep his balance, he jumped.

Oh, what a moment of profound excitement! Would he regain his footing all that distance below? Balancing himself for a moment

in the air after his jump, he regained his footing, and sped away down the hillside, stopping himself by a sharp turn of the *ski* as he was nearing the loudly applauding spectators. One after another they came, and at least 50 per cent succeeded in landing on their feet and speeding away.

The longest jump of all was 26½ metres, that is to say, nearly 88 feet, and this was done by Ustvedt; but he did not regain his footing. Ingemann Sverre, who jumped 22 metres, and landed on his feet to continue his course, won the king's cup and the ladies' purse.

We looked on and marvelled.

Such competitions are now beginning in Finland, where *ski* soon promise to be as fashionable as in Norway. *Ski* are called—

In Swedish *Skida*, plural *Skidor*.
In Finnish *Suksi*, „ *Sukset*.

They are almost the same as the Norwegian shoes, excepting that they always have an inward curve under the foot, and seldom have a heel-strap. The heel-strap is only necessary for jumping or for going uphill, and as there is little jumping and no hills to speak of in Finland, the shoe, being curved up at the toe like a Chinaman's, is sufficient to keep the *Sukset* on the feet.

Bears, as said before, do not walk hourly in the streets of Finland. Nevertheless, bears do exist, and in the Northern and Easterly districts in considerable numbers. It is in winter that the bear-hunts take place, and, having discovered the whereabouts of the monarch of the forest, the Finlander disturbs him from his winter sleep, either by smoke or by the aid of dogs, and then for days follows him over the snow. The bear is an adept at walking through snow, but the man on *sukset* is his match, and after circling bruin in parties, or chasing him alone, he generally falls in the end to some sportsman's gun. It is a great day when the dead bear is brought back to the village, and one usually celebrated by a triumphal procession, merrymaking, and a grand feast, followed by much singing of the national songs, handed down from father to son, and thrilling tales of wondrous acts of daring at bear-hunts, for in the

Kalevala the bear is a great subject for the poet's verse. The man who fired the fatal shot is, on the occasion of the bear-feast, naturally the hero, and for him it is an occasion to be gratefully remembered. Every Finn speaks with profound admiration and bated breath of *Mâiten Kitunen*, who during his life killed 198 fully-grown bears, besides innumerable young ones. It must not be imagined from this that bear-killing is an easy sport; on the contrary, it is extremely dangerous, for the fatigue and perils of *skidâkning* the wild forests, with a very low temperature, for hours and hours is in itself a perilous pastime. Frost-bite is by no means uncommon, and, of course, in such a low temperature, it is impossible to sit down and rest, lest that drowsy sleep, so dreaded in cold climates, should take hold of the weary man and gradually lull him into his last slumber. Nevertheless, women, who in Finland are particularly enterprising, sometimes take part in bear-hunts, and it is on record that several have themselves shot fully-grown animals. No mean achievement for a woman!

Many women stalk the deer in Scotland, and some have made wonderful bags, but then, although stalking often necessitates many weary hours' walking, there is not in Scotland such severe and perilous cold to deal with. In Finland many ladies shoot, and when a hare is killed the cry of *All's Tod* rings through the forest, and sounds almost as inspiriting as the cry of the hounds at home.

Tobogganing is another great institution in Finland, and as the hills in the South are not steep enough for a really good spin, the Finlanders put up a *Kälkbacke* or *Skrinnbacke*, in imitation of their Russian friends, and now enjoy rattling spins, and moments of intense excitement, gliding down these dangerous routes. They are really switchbacks made of ice and snow, and as they are very steep, the pace is terrific.

In the summer yachting is one of the great institutions of Finland, and we were lucky enough to be in *Wiborg* at the time of the great race between *Wiborg* and *Helsingfors* for the Yacht Cup.

It was a delightful day, and a large steamer having been chartered by our host, whose son was the President of the *Wiborg* Yacht Club, he invited his friends to see the race. We were a very merry party of forty or fifty, as we steamed away from the *Wiborg* pier to where the two yachts were to meet.

The *Menelik* belongs to *Wiborg;* the *Thelma* to *Helsingfors.* The *Menelik* is a lugger, built in *Wiborg* at the yard of Hackman Company, although designed by Arthur E. Payne of Southampton. She is a two and a half rater.

The *Helsingfors* boat was designed by Charles Sibbick in Cowes, England.

The Yacht Club in *Helsingfors* began its existence in 1876, and is certainly in a very flourishing condition. The course was a long one, and the two best days' sailing out of three secures the Cup. The first day was a trial to the patience of the steersmen. It was a dead calm; such a calm as one seldom meets with, and not until the afternoon did the faintest breeze spring up, while even then the sailing so far exceeded the seven hours' time allowed that the day was drawn as a blank.

But, as onlookers, we enjoyed the day immensely; there were numbers of steamers like ourselves on pleasure bent, the umpire's boat, and several rowing boats which had managed to come out so far to sea, the day being calm. The end was all that our kind host could wish, for the *Menelik* won by three minutes!

Dancing is a very popular form of entertainment in Finland, and often indulged in by old and young. It is quite a custom on Saturday evening for the young folk from various villages to meet together at some workmen's recreation room, or at one of the larger farms and have a ball. One of the best specimens of such an entertainment we chanced to see was at the old-world city of *Åbo.* About a mile from the town a new park has been opened, in the arrangements of which our friend, the chief of the police, took the greatest interest, and to it, after a charming little

dinner, he escorted us to see the peasant ball in full swing.

Every Saturday at six o'clock it begins; and, as some sort of restraint is necessary, the sum of one penny is charged to each would-be dancer.

In the middle of the park is a large *kiosk*, big enough for a couple of hundred folk to pirouette at a time. It has a roof supported by pillars, but there are no side walls. A couple of fiddlers were playing hard when we entered, and a cornet coming in at odd minutes composed the band, and, until midnight, the couples twirled and whisked round and round the wooden floor.

The great national dance of the country is called the *jenka*. It is more like a schottische perhaps than anything else; and really it was extraordinary to see how well these peasants danced, and how they beat time. Thoroughly they entered into the spirit of the thing, the polka, waltz, and *jenka* being all danced in turn, until the park closed.

Writing letters in Finland is an expensive amusement. Every epistle, not delivered by private hand, costs twopence for transmission; rather a high rate for home postage, considering that foreign letters only cost a fourth more. Post-cards cost one penny, whether for home or foreign use.

This high rate of postage seems very remarkable, considering the almost universal adoption of Sir Rowland Hill's enlightened suggestion that a penny would pay.

We learn that during the year 1896 our English post-office passed 1,834,200,000 letters and 314,500,000 post-cards; and, writing on the same subject, the Duke of Norfolk says, "The penny letter has long been known to be the sheet anchor of the post-office, and it is interesting to record that no less than 95 per cent of the total number of inland letters passed for a penny each."

Finland might take the hint and institute a penny post; but we hope she will not send 31,000 letters *unaddressed*, as we English did, their valuable contents amounting to nearly £4000!

The quickest postal route to Finland is *vid St. Petersburg;* but letters are often delayed to be searched, and they are not unfrequently lost, so that all important epistles are best registered; and one Finnish family, some of whose relations live in Germany, told us they never thought of sending letters either way without registering them first.

Finland has her own stamps—a great concession from the Tzar—but all letters passing direct from Russia to Finland, or Finland to Russia, must have ordinary Russian stamps upon them.

Telegrams from or to Finland are ruinous. Even in *Suomi* itself they cost a small fortune, and outside they are even worse; but then no one telegraphs to any one in the territory, for almost every person has a telephone, which can be annexed from town to town, and those who have not telephones can go to a public office and expend a penny on their message, therefore in that respect the Finns are in advance of us.

We were amused to find the Finlanders very inquisitive. This is as much a trait in their character as their stubborn obstinacy, their intense truthfulness, or their wondrous honesty. And a Finn runs a Scotchman very hard in evading a straightforward answer.

"Does the train leave at two?"

The question is replied to by the Scot, "Maybe it does;" but the Finlander says, "It is advertised to do so;" thus getting out of a direct answer, for where the Englishman would say "Yes" or "No" if he knew, the other two nations would never dream of doing such a thing. The inhabitants of this Grand Duchy are, as has been stated, wondrously inquisitive. The peasant asks where you come from the moment he sees you are a stranger, and the better-class folk soon turn the traveller in their midst inside out with questions. They ask not only "Where do you come from?" but, "Where are you going?" "What is your business?" "Have you a husband, wife, father, mother, brothers, sisters," etc. One inquiry is piled upon another.

All most good-naturedly, 'tis true, but occasionally inconvenient nevertheless.

Finns are very intense; they are men of few words; slow to anger, and slower to forgive. They never do anything in a hurry. Life is very serious to them, and they endure great privations with patience. They never trifle; flirtation they abhor; and chaff they simply do not understand. They are honest to a degree, kindhearted, respect law and order, and love peace. They are more than hospitable; they are, in fact, overpoweringly generous in their invitations to the veriest stranger, and kind in their dealings with foreigners—doing their best to entertain them, to understand their speech, and to show them all they can of their land, of which they are immensely proud.

CHAPTER VIII

IMATRA'S ROARING CATARACT

THE scenery of Finland is, as a rule, neither grand nor impressive. It has not the mountains of Switzerland topped with everlasting snow, or the rocky fjords of Norway; no dear little Tyrolese châlets, or sweet English cottages set in fair gardens, no splendid stretches of emerald-green, and iron-bound coast scenery such as is the delight of the tourist in Ireland, or the purple-crowned hills of Scotland; nevertheless, it has a charm of its own, and can boast more lakes, canals, and rivers, all joined together in some marvellous way, than any of the countries mentioned.

It is indeed a land of many thousand lakes, and one might add many, many thousand islands. There are large islands covered with pine forests, tiny solitary rocky islets, on which perchance a house has been built for a pilot; mere patches of earth islands, where sometimes flourishes one solitary pine, that looks from a distance as if it were actually growing on the surface of the water.

Round the coast line there are dangerous and hidden haunts where smuggling goes on to a large extent, while, when traversing the inland lakes, big steamers have to keep to certain routes marked by buoys—sometimes merely by sticks.

Except in the far North the country is very flat, and even in the North about 4000 feet is the limit of the highest land. Further South as many hundred seem to be as great a rarity, although the country is by no means so level as Holland, Denmark, or Russia.

BELOW IMATRA

One can travel nearly all over Finland in steamers, and very comfortable steamers they are too, with nice little cabins and good restaurants. Provided with one's own deck-chair, many pleasant days can be passed on the calm waters round the coast, or the yet calmer lakes and canals inland, where one marvels at the engineering skill and the wonderful steering powers of English-speaking captains of Finnish birth.

We decided on our way back from *Sordavala* to stop at the famous cataract of *Imatra*. It was one of the few railway journeys we made during our jaunt in Finland, and it proved somewhat remarkable.

Can there be such a thing as a musical train? If so, verily the name would apply to that by which we travelled. The passengers were made up of odds and ends; among them were most of the students who had taken part in the Festival, a great many representatives of various choirs, some of the athletes who had charmed us with their gymnastic exercises, for which the country is famous, and several visitors like ourselves. Of course, these folk never previously practised singing together, but after Professor Dickenson, standing on the platform, had returned thanks on behalf of the visitors for their cordial reception in *Sordavald*, which speech was replied to by the Mayor of the town, some one called upon the audience to sing the national air "*Maamme*." The voices rose and fell immediately. Heads were poked out from carriage windows in order that lusty throats might sing their beloved air. All at once three students on the platform waved their caps on high, and a regular musical performance ensued. To a stranger it seemed a remarkable demonstration.

Supposing the occupants of an English train were suddenly called upon to sing "God save the Queen," what would be the result? Why, that more than half the passengers would prove so shy they could not even attempt it; another quarter might wander about the notes at their own sweet will, and, perhaps, a small percentage would sing

it in tune. But then, just think, the Finns are so imbued with music, and practise so continually—for they seem to sing on every conceivable occasion—that the sopranos naturally took up their part, the basses and the tenors kept to their own notes, and perfect harmony prevailed.

Not content with singing half a dozen songs while waiting for the train to get under way, many carriage loads sang off and on during the whole seven hours of the journey to *Andreq*, where we changed in order to catch a train for *Imatra*. Having an hour to spare at this junction, a walk was suggested along the railway line. This was not at all so dangerous a feat as might be imagined, for although only a single line, trains ran so very seldom that pedestrians might walk up and down for half a day and never see one!

We wandered with a delightful man whose rôle it was to act as interpreter between the Finnish and Swedish languages in the House of Commons, a position called *tulkki* or translator.

We were amazed to find him conversant with all kinds of English literature; he spoke with familiarity of Dickens, Thackeray, Shakespeare, twelve of whose plays, by the bye, have been translated into Finnish and performed at the theatre, and was even acquainted with the works of Rudyard Kipling, Swinburne, Browning, and Mrs. Humphry Ward. With equal aptitude he discussed Daudet and Zola, Tolstoi and Tourgenieff, and, to our astonishment, we found that although he spoke only indifferent German, he could read English, French, German, and Russian authors in the original.

Speaking of the *tulkki*, one cannot help pausing to contemplate this strange institution. The *tulkki* is necessary because many people in Finland do not understand Swedish, and numbers of persons speaking Swedish do not understand Finnish; yet both these people belong to the same nation and are governed by the same laws.

Though every year this Babel of tongues is growing less audible, and Finnish coming more to the front, one yet

realises the political difficulties of a country where, actually in the Houses of Parliament, representatives of the people sit who cannot understand one another, and require translators to explain what their "honourable friend says." The position seems untenable, but may right itself in time.

As we wandered down the railway line, our attention was arrested by an extraordinary carriage which stood on a siding. A sort of engine was in front, but, behind, a glass house composed the remainder of the waggon. We had never before seen anything like it, and wondered if it could be an observatory on wheels, until we noticed that in the forepart of the train was a snow-plough, such as is to be seen on every engine in Norway during mid-winter, a plough which closely resembles an American cow-catcher.

"That," remarked our friend, "is a Finnish snow-plough. It is with the greatest difficulty we can keep the lines clear in winter, and it is not sufficient to have an ordinary snow-plough attached to the engine, therefore, just as ice-breakers endeavour to keep the port of *Hangö* open during winter, so these snow-ploughs ply to and fro along the railway lines, throwing up vast heaps of snow on each side, until they make a wall sometimes 10 or 12 feet high. These walls form a sort of protection to the trains from cold, and gradually become so hard that, by the end of the winter snow, they might be built of stone, they are so strong."

There are not many railways in Finland, the first being laid in 1862; they are all narrow gauge.

Speaking of the ice-breaker at *Hangö*, we may say that, in spite of all endeavours to keep the only winter port of Finland open during the cold months of 1881, 1886, 1889, and 1893, ice gained the mastery, and for several weeks that Finnish port was closed.

Our friend was a most interesting companion, and explained something of the mysteries of the University. He told us that it was first founded in 1640 at *Åbo*, but in 1829, when *Åbo* was burnt to ashes and many thousand volumes were destroyed, it was considered advisable to move

the University to *Helsingfors*, a town which at that time had a larger population than the older capital.

"You see," he said, "we have no Court here, no great wealth, but few nobility, and, therefore, every one and everything is centred round our University. It comprises four faculties—theology, law, medicine, and philosophy."

"What does your title of *Magister* mean?" we ventured to ask.

"It is equivalent to your M.A.," he said; "but our degrees are only given every fourth year, when we keep up much old-fashioned pomp. Crowds of people come to see the ceremony, and all the successful candidates, as they receive their degrees, are given, if they are Master of Arts, a gold ring, if doctors, a silk-covered hat, while on their heads a crown of laurels is actually placed. It is an old custom for each man to choose one from among his lady friends to be his *wreath-binder*, and she is supposed to undertake the making of his laurel crown. This was all very well so long as men only took the degree, but great jokes have arisen since women have stepped in, because ladies naturally think it is only right that men should weave their laurel-wreaths."

"And do they?"

"I believe they do. If not actually with their own hands, they superintend the making of such wreaths for their lady friends, whom we welcome to our University with open arms."

When we had arrived at *Andrea*, on our journey to *Imatra* from the Russian frontier, out tumbled a number of cyclists, who found to their distress that it would be necessary to wait about half an hour to continue their journey. It was overpoweringly hot; these young students stood on the platform discussing the situation, and at last they decided to cycle the twenty or thirty miles instead of waiting for the train. They took off their coats and strapped them on to the handles of their machines, and in pretty flannel shirts, gaily chaffing and laughing, off they

started for their ride. We rather pitied them, as we saw them start under those melting sun's rays, and preferred our own idea of a quiet stroll.

At last we heard the whistle of our train, and had to scamper back along the railway line in order to secure our seats.

We crawled along, in the usual fashion of Finnish trains, to the world-renowned *Imatra.* Arrived at the hotel, which is built beside the roaring cataract, where thousands of tons of water rush and tear from January to December, we went into the dining-room to order dinner, and there, sitting round the table in the best of spirits, were the students, who had ridden quicker from *Andrea* than our train had brought us!

Parts of Finland are very beautiful, and travelling through the country is a most interesting experience; but, at the same time, there are none of the excellent cycling roads such as we find in France or Germany, although the country has not the disadvantage of Norway in being one endless chain of hills, and the ordinary cyclist need never dismount as far as hills are concerned; but the roads, although well marked by sign-posts and mile-stones (kilometres), are certainly not good.

Oh! the joy that night of being in a real hotel, with a real brass bedstead and a real spring mattress, to say nothing of once again seeing a proper sized wash-hand basin and jug.

Above the roar of the seething waters, fretting at our very feet, claps of thunder made themselves heard, and rain descended in torrents, while vivid flashes of lightning lit up the wondrous cataract of *Imatra.*

Thunderstorms are quite common in those parts, and we felt glad of that one, as it did something to dispel for a time the oppressive heat.

Next morning the scene was changed, and as we looked in calm weather from the balcony window, we were fascinated by the vast volume of water dashing ceaselessly on its ruthless way below.

Later, sitting on a rocky boulder, we gazed in awe at the scene before us. This was *Imatra.* This one of the three famous falls which form the chain of a vast cataract. This avalanche of foam and spray, this swirling, tearing, rushing stream, this endless torrent pursuing its wild course, year in, year out—this was *Imatra,* one of the strongest water powers in the world.

Not a waterfall in the real sense of the word, for within the space of half a mile the water only actually falls about 40 feet; but that narrow channel, scarcely 20 yards across, with its rock-bound walls, is daily washed by thousands and thousands of tons of foaming water, poured into it from the quickly flowing *Vuoksen's* wide waters.

As we sat and contemplated one of the grandest efforts of creation, this wonderful compression of a vast river into a narrow gorge, we realised how small is the power of man compared with the mighty strength of nature. See how the waves, which can be likened only to the waves of the sea in time of storm, as if in fury at their sudden compression, rush over that rock, then curl back, and pause in the air a moment before tearing on, roaring and hissing with rage, to the whirlpool farther down the stream! See how they dash from side to side, see how the spray rises in the air for the dainty sunlight to play among its foam! Hear the noise, like that of thunder, as a great angry white horse dashes down that storm-washed chasm! this is strength and force and power, this is beauty and grandeur. This is *Imatra,* one of Finland's gems set in a regal crown.

Such a scene enters one's very soul; such grand majestic power, such might, such enormous force, inspire one with lofty feelings, and makes one realise a greater power, a greater strength than our poor world can give. Are we not all the better for looking on such scenes? These vast glories of nature, however, should be viewed in peace to enable the spectator to enjoy their greatness, and to receive their full influence.

Yet the hand of the Philistine is, alas! to be found even

in primitive Finland. As the modern Roman lights his glorious Colosseum with red and purple fires, so the Finn illumines his wondrous falls with electric light! spans it by the most modern of modern bridges, and does not even attempt to hide "the latest improvements" by a coating of pine trunks. Worse still, he writes or carves his name on every bench and on numerous rocks, and erects hideous summer-houses built of wooden plankings and tin, where the knotted pine-tree would have been more useful and twice as picturesque.

Finland, pause! If you wish to entice travellers to your shores, to bring strangers among you, keep your beautiful nature unspoiled, or, where change is absolutely necessary, try to imitate nature's own methods by using the glorious trees around you, instead of iron and tin shaped by man's hand; pause before you have murdered your natural loveliness by ghastly modernity, or you will be too late.

Attend to your sanitation if you will—that requires seeing to badly; provide more water and more towels for travellers who are accustomed to wash themselves in private, but don't imagine hideous modern erections will attract tourists, they but discourage them.

Imatra is glorious. *Wallinkoski*, the lower fall, is more picturesque, perhaps, but both are wonderful; they are worth journeying far to see, and holding in recollection for ever. We have nothing like them anywhere in Britain. The Falls of Foyers are as crumbs in a loaf of bread when compared with *Imatra*. The fall at Badgastein is as nothing beside Finland's great cataract; *Hönefos* in Norway a mere trifle!. Of Niagara we cannot speak for lack of knowledge, but in Europe *Imatra* stands alone, with *perhaps* the exception of its solitary rival, *Trollhätten* in Sweden, the exquisite beauty of which is already marred by the sacrilegious hand of the Philistine!

Above all, Finland, you should not allow St. Petersburg to light her streets with your water power; there is enough water in *Imatra* to light half Europe—but keep it for

yourselves, keep it as a pearl in a beautiful casket. *Imatra* is one of Finland's grandest possessions.

It seems impossible that salmon could live in such a cataract, but yet it is a fact that they do.

Verily, Finland is a paradise for fishermen. A paradise for lines and rods, reels and flies, for masters of the piscatorial art; there are to be found fresh-water lakes, and glorious rivers full of fish. Some call it the heaven of anglers, and permission to fish can easily be obtained, and is absurdly inexpensive.

The best-known spot is *Harraka*, near *Imatra*, because the English Fishing Club from St. Petersburg found sport in those wonderful waters until they acquired *Varpa Saari*, an island a little farther down the river.

The *Saimen Lake* is about 150 miles long, and the river *Vuoksen*, which forms *Imatra*, joins this fishing water with the famous *Lodoga*, the largest lake in Europe, which again empties itself into the sea by the *Neva*.

This is not a fishing-book, or pages might be written of happy hours spent with grayling or trout with a fly, or spinning from a boat with a minnow.

Kind reader, have you ever been driven in a *Black Maria?* That is, we believe, the name of the cumbersome carriage which conveys prisoners from one police-station to another, or to their prison home? We have; but it was not an English *Black Maria*, and, luckily, we were never anywhere taken from one police-station to another. Our *Black Maria* was the omnibus that plies between *Imatra* and *Rättijärvi*, some 20 miles distant, where we travelled in order to catch the steamer which was to convey us down the famous *Saimen Canal* back to our delightful *Ilkeäsaari* host, in time for the annual *Johanni* and the wonderful *Kokko* fires, more famous in Finland to-day than the Baal fires formerly were in Britain.

It was a beautiful drive; at least we gathered that it would have been a beautiful drive if we had not been shut up in the *Black Maria*. As it was, we were nearly jolted

to death on the hardest of hard wooden seats, and arrived stiff, sore, and tired, with aching backs at *Rättijärvi.*

A very good dinner, however, soon made us forget our miseries, though it really seemed as if we had come in a prison van, when, the moment our *Black Maria* drew up at the small inn, a man rushed down the steps, seized upon the *Magister* and began, violently gesticulating, to explain something about money.

What on earth had the poor *Magister* done that he should be jumped on in this way? Were we criminals without our knowledge, and was this our jailor who stood gesticulating, and scowling, and waving his arms about in excitement? We felt we must immediately produce our passports to prove our respectability, and, strong in our knowledge of innocence, were quite prepared to maintain our rights of freedom in spite of the appearance of any limb of Finnish law.

After all, it proved to be a mere flash in the pan! Explanation was soon vouchsafed. We had driven that morning in a private carriage to *Wallinkoski* to see the wonderful fall below *Imatra*, and the landlord, having forgotten to charge that journey in the bill, had allowed us to leave *Imatra* without paying for his beautiful equipage; discovering his mistake, however, as soon as our backs were turned, he had telephoned to get the gentleman to send back the money by *Black Maria.* Though we had so dishonestly departed without paying our just debts, nothing worse came of the matter.

We might have been locked up in a Finnish prison!

CHAPTER IX

'KOKKO' FIRES

As we stood on the little pier at *Rättijärvi*, waiting for the steamer which was to bear us down the beautiful *Saimen Canal*, we were somewhat horrified to find that the only other probable passengers were two men, both of whom were practically unable to keep on their feet. In honour of the day they had apparently been having a jollification, and it will ever remain a marvel to us that they did not tumble over the side of the pier—which had no railing—into the water beneath.

It seemed almost impossible, under the circumstances, to believe that in the rural districts of Finland generally, no one is allowed to sell spirituous liquors or to distil them, and that there is a very strict law against importing spirits into Finland at all, while if more than ten litres are sent from one place to another in the country they are "subject to control." Indeed, no person, unless licensed to sell spirits, is allowed to keep more than six litres in his house for every grown-up individual living in the establishment; and the same rigorous rules that apply to spirits are enforced against liqueurs which, when tried at a temperature of 15° Celsius, are found to contain more than 22 per cent of alcohol.

The temperance regulations are most stringent, and yet we are reluctantly obliged to own we saw a vast amount of drunkenness in *Suomi*.

The Civic Authorities can, and do, give the whole trade

of wine, spirits, and liqueurs as a monopoly for two consecutive years to companies who undertake to sell, not for their own gain, but "in the interests of morality and sobriety;" three-fifths of the profits being paid to the town for general purposes of usefulness, and the remaining two-fifths to the State.

As regards beer—in the country the County Councils rule the selling, in the towns the Civic Authorities. The brewers are, however, allowed to sell beer, provided they do not give more than twenty-five litres to one person.

The Senate or the Governor can, in some cases, grant special licenses to sell wines and spirits to bathing-places, steamers, etc.,—from all of which careful, not to say stringent, regulations, it may be inferred that Finland is rigorous as regards the drink question; wherefore strangers feel all the more surprised to meet inebriates so constantly, as we must, unfortunately, admit to be the case.

The two men rolling about at the end of the pier and, singing lustily, sadly disturbed our peace of mind, for my sister and I were going back to *Ilkeäsaari* alone, and as they seemed likely to be our only companions, we felt a couple of hours spent in such society would be rather more than we cared for!

Ah! what was that? Emerging from a lock came rather a bower of greenery than a steamer. The little ship was literally covered, not only with branches, but with whole birch-trees, and very pretty she looked as she glided towards us, decorated for the famous *Johannulta* (Midsummer Day).

Taking hasty farewells of Grandpapa and the *Magister*, whom we were to meet again a week or two later, we hurried on board, and found to our joy that the unsteady Finlanders were not allowed to follow us. With a puff and a whistle the steamer left such undesirable passengers behind, and the last we saw of them was fighting and struggling with one another, each man apparently imagining, in his muddled imbecility, that his companion had kept him

from going on board, whereas in reality the ticket-collector, now safely journeying with us, was the sole offender.

It is a delightful journey down the famous *Saimen Canal*, and there was a particular charm about it that night, because, as evening advanced, great beacon fires illuminated the scene.

This *Canal*, which took eleven years to make, is very beautiful. It passes through twenty-eight locks, generally with a fall of about 9 feet for each; that is to say, the entire fall is nearly 300 feet. The canal is only wide enough for one ship to pass at a time, except at the *crossing* places; and when steamers pass up or down, all other traffic has to draw into one of these sidings.

We thoroughly enjoyed the beautiful night as we glided over that wonderful achievement of engineering skill. The locks were only just large enough to admit of our steamer, and it really seemed as if but a few inches at either end and at the sides were to spare.

It was Midsummer Day; the greatest day of the whole year in a Finn's estimation. Hence the decorations. We passed steamers all gaily festooned with the sacred birch, as our own little ship, and huge barges of wood ornamented in similar fashion floating down to the sea. Picturesque little girls, with handkerchiefs tied over their heads, were running about on the banks selling wild strawberries. They were dressed in long skirts, which hung to their ankles, and wore no shoes or stockings.

In spite of the terrific thunderstorm on the previous night, the thermometer had stood all day at about 96° in the shade. As we glided along, a lurid black sky looked threatening behind us, while forked lightning—such forked lightning as we had never seen before, played games in the heavens. And yet, at the self-same time, on the other side was to be seen one of the most glorious sunsets that can possibly be imagined; one of those marvellous bits of colour which make those who behold it feel how inadequate are brush and canvas to reproduce such glorious tones.

We were now returning to finish our visit at *Ilkäsaari*, and, it being the Finnish Midsummer Day, we had been compelled to hurry our trip from *Sordavala* somewhat, so as to be back in time to see the famous pagan *Kokko* fires.

As is well known, it was—till comparatively recent times—the custom even in England to light on St. John's Eve *Bael* or *Baal* fires, which were really a survival of pagan Sun Worship. All over Finland *Bael* fires are still lighted on *Johannulta*, midsummer eve.

The people look forward from year to year to these *Kokko* fires, as *Johanni* is the great festival both for rich and poor. All is bustle and confusion on the 23rd of June, preparing for the event. Then comes the lighting of the *Kokko*, and, later in the evening, the *bond dans* or ball —no one apparently going to bed that night—which ball is followed by a universal holiday.

As to the origin of the *Kokko* fires, no one in Finland seems very certain. The custom must be a very ancient one, though it is continued universally in that little-known country to the present day. As a rule, the bonfire is lit on the top of a hill, or in places where there is water at the water's edge, preferably on a small island, or sometimes on a raft which, when ignited, is floated out over the surface of the lake.

The 24th of June being about the brightest day in a land where, at that time of year, it is everlasting daylight, the effect of the brilliant artificial illumination is marred in consequence of the absence of a gloomy, weird, and mysteriously indistinct background of night, the sky in those high latitudes being, during the summer nights, never darker than it is in England at dawn. Nevertheless, the *Kokko* are so big that they assert themselves, and as we sailed down the canal we must have passed a dozen or more of those flaming beacons. It is difficult to estimate their size. Wood in Finland is comparatively valueless; tar is literally made on the premises; consequently old tar-barrels are placed one on the top of another, branches, and even trunks of trees,

surmount the whole, and the erection is some 20 or 30 feet high before it is ignited. Imagine, then, the flames that ascend when once the magic match fires the much-betarred heap.

For hours and hours those *Kokko* fires burnt. Indeed, it would be considered ill luck if they did not smoulder through the whole of the night. And it is round such festive flames that the peasant folks gather to dance and sing and play games, and generally celebrate the festival of the ancient god *Bael*. The large landed proprietors invite their tenantry to these great ceremonies, and for hours before it is time to light the fire boats are arriving laden with guests.

When we landed about nine o'clock on the private pier at *Ilkeäsaari*, at which we had asked our captain to set us ashore, we were warmly met by our hostess, and told that their *Kokko* was ready and only waiting our arrival to be ignited. So away we all sped to the other side of the island to see the fun.

All the members of the family had assembled—some thirty or forty people, in fact, for Finland is famous for big families—and tables of cakes and coffee were spread at a point from which every one could see the enormous *Kokko*, as high as a haystack, standing on a lonely rock in the water. The boatmen went off and lighted it, having thrown turpentine over the dried branches, and stacked up tar-barrels, so that it might the more readily catch fire, and in a few moments huge volumes of smoke began to ascend, and the flames danced high into the heavens. Great tongues of fire leapt and sprung on high, only to be reflected in all their glory in the smooth waters below. Peering down an avenue of pine-trees to the lake beyond, that fire looked very grand —a splendid relic of ancient heathenism.

Every one sang as the *Kokko* burst into flame. The General of the garrison, the dapper young lieutenant, the dear old grandmother, the men and women students of the party in their pretty white caps, the children dressed as

dear little Swedish peasants — all joined the choruses; while behind were the servants and the real peasants themselves. The tenants had come over the water to enjoy the fun at their master's home in boats so gaily decorated with huge boughs of the sacred birch-tree that the boat itself was almost hidden. Finnish singing is generally rather weird chanting, sad and melancholy, but not without a strange fascination, and the way a number of odd people in that huge assembly could sing together, each taking his or her own part, without any previous practice, showed the marvellous amount of music inborn in the Finlander.

It was a beautiful night. The rich shades of the sunset fighting the warm colours of the flames, the gurgling of the water, and the surging of the peasants' boats, or the swish of their oars as they rowed to the festival in gay holiday attire, was something to be remembered. The surroundings were poetical, the scene picturesque, the music delightful, and a barbaric lustre overspread it all as the ascending flames shed lurid lights on the faces of the spectators, while the rocks on which we stood reflected the warm colours caught by the trunks of the pine-trees, whose tops soared heavenwards as though trying to kiss the fleeting clouds.

Laughter and merriment rent the air, as youth mingled with age, riches with poverty, in true happiness, for was it not *Johannulta*—a night when all must be gay!

Gradually, as the time wore on, the fires burnt low, the lights and reflections became less and less distinct on the water, the shadows of evening fell, and the dew of night was in the air; then, and not till then, did we repair to a huge room adjoining the house, used for the grandchildren to play in during summer, or for weddings and such like festivals, and here the family, the guests, the servants, and the peasants danced. Finnish dances are strange; a young man spies a young woman, he rushes at her, seizes her by the waist, dances lustily, and then lets her go as if she were a hot potato! But that night there was a hero—a real live

hero—the native of a neighbouring village who had been away in America for seven years, and just returned rich and prosperous, and full of adventures, to his fatherland. Every girl in the place was dying to talk to him, to dance with him, and he, in return, told them "how beautiful every woman was in America, how they talked, and sang, and danced, and laughed, and how America was enchanting," etc., etc., until all the maids grew jealous!

We slipped off to bed at midnight, but the *bond dans* went on till breakfast-time, for a Finn who cannot dance the *jenka* all through midsummer night is not considered worthy of his country!

The festivals continued all the next day for those who were not too sleepy to enjoy them!

CHAPTER X

WOMEN AND EDUCATION

BEFORE describing our life in a haunted castle, we must pause and reflect on two of the most important factors in Finnish life—the position of women, and the excellence of education. For it is the present advancement of both that will make a great future for *Suomi*, and even to-day can teach us much.

Out of a small population of about two and a half millions, there are in Finland 36,000 more women than men; this may perhaps, in some measure, account for the wonderful way in which women there have pushed themselves to the front, and ceased to look upon matrimony as the only profession open to the sex!

The system of public instruction is making rapid progress. The expenses of primary education are divided between the State and the Communes, while those of the higher education generally fall on the State.

The Finnish University, founded in 1640, is maintained by the latter, and includes four faculties.

In 1870 the first woman matriculated at the University, three years later another followed suit, but until 1885 they were alone, when two others joined them. It was very difficult in those days to obtain permission to enter for the matriculation; at present there are a large number of female students, several of whom have taken degrees in medicine, dentistry, arts, law, and science.

The woman question is now one of great moment in

Finland, but the first book published on the subject only appeared in May 1894. This *Calender of Women's Work* was really a great undertaking, and the statistics and materials to complete it were collected by more than a thousand agents of both sexes, the Senate giving a grant of three thousand marks to pay for the printing expenses. Its object was, by giving careful tables of employment, and names and addresses of employers, to enable young women readily to find a vocation.

Beginning by a historic sketch, it showed how Finnish linen was celebrated as early as 1552, and how taxes were paid by such means at that time.

It pointed out the present great desire to increase home industries, and stated that out of 530 parishes applied to, 400 had sent to the Women's Association asking for help in the formation of schools, or loan of patterns and models, implements and tools.

It noticed how, in 1890, a vast number of women were employed upon the land: 8580 peasants, 2516 farmers, 5631 cottagers, and 76,857 agricultural servants; we must remember Finnish women are physically strong and well-fitted for agricultural work. Dairying now employs a vast number.

(But although so many women at that time were actively engaged upon the land, they were, strangely enough, not allowed to study at the agricultural colleges!)

It showed how dairy work was being much taken up by women who tended the cows, milked them, made the butter, for which they obtained prizes, and went on to notice how gardening was being developed in the country, and how it might further be undertaken with advantage.

We purpose showing, by statistics, the enormous number of women now employed as clerks in business offices of all kinds, in shops, and public works, and we may add that, in 1894, 50 women were principals of workhouses, 130 were Poor Law Guardians, and 283 were members of School Boards.

In other pages we note the tremendous work women are doing in education. In fact, one cannot travel through Finland without being struck by the position of women on every side. It may, of course, arise from the fact that the Finns are poor, and, large families not being uncommon, it is impossible for the parents to keep their daughters in idleness, and as no country is more democratic than Finland, where there is no court and little aristocracy, the daughters of senators and generals take up all kinds of work. Whatever the cause, it is amazing to find the vast number of employments open to women, and the excellent way in which they fill these posts. There is no law to prevent women working at anything they choose.

Amongst the unmarried women it is more the exception than the rule to find them idle, and instead of work being looked upon as degrading, it is admired on all sides, especially teaching, which is considered one of the finest positions for a man or woman in Finland. And it is scientific teaching, for they learn how to impart knowledge to others, instead of doing it in a dilatory and dilettante manner, as so often happens elsewhere.

We were impressed by the fact of the marvellous energy and splendid independence of the women of *Suomi*. Of course, there may be cases of hysteria and some of the weaker feminine ailments, which are a disgrace to the sex, but we never came across any.

All this is particularly interesting with the struggle going on now around us, for to our mind it is remarkable that so remote a country, one so little known and so unappreciated, should thus suddenly burst forth and hold the most advanced ideas for both men and women. That endless sex question is never discussed. There is no sex in Finland, *men and women are practically equals*, and on that basis society is formed. Sex equality has always been a characteristic of the race, as we find from the ancient *Kalevala* poem.

In spite of advanced education, in spite of the emancipa-

tion of women (which is erroneously supposed to work otherwise), Finland is noted for its morality, and, indeed, stands among the nations of Europe as one of the most virtuous.

There is no married woman's property act, all property being owned jointly by husband and wife. This is called the marriage rite.

In the excellent pamphlet printed for the Chicago Exhibition, we find the following:—

MARRIAGE

Marriageable Age.—According to the law which is now in force, a girl need be no more than fifteen years of age in order to be marriageable. Very few girls, however, marry at such an early age. Among the peasantry, women, as a rule, marry earlier than they do among the cultivated classes.

The Solemnisation of Marriages.—According to the law of 1734, which remained valid until 1864, a spinster could not marry without the consent of her father, or, if he were dead, of her mother. Both parents being dead, this duty devolved upon the eldest male member of the family.

In the year 1864 (31st October) a law was enacted according to which girls, after their twenty-first year, are free to marry without the consent of either father or mother. For a marriage to be lawful the banns must be read from the pulpit on three several Sundays, and the marriage ceremony must be performed by a clergyman.

Statutes of 1889.—In the statutes of 1889 the law on antenuptial marriage agreements was altered to the advantage of the wife. By means of antenuptial agreements a woman may now not only retain as her special property whatever she possessed before marriage, and whatever she may have, after marriage, inherited, received as a gift, or as a legacy, but she may also *reserve for herself the right of taking charge of and managing her own property and the income thereof.*

As soon as the marriage ceremony has been performed, "the husband becomes the natural guardian of his wife," is responsible for her and manages their property.

In spite, however, of a woman being under the legal guardianship of her husband, there is probably no country where women are held in more reverence and respect than in Finland. While in Germany the *Hausfrau* takes a

back seat on all occasions, hardly speaking before her lord and master, and being in many cases scarcely better than a general servant (of the Jack-of-all-trades and master of none class), doing a little cooking, seeing to the dusting and cleaning, helping make the beds, wash the children, and everlastingly producing her big basket of *Handarbeit*, the Finnish woman, although just as domesticated, is less ostentatious in her performance of such duties, and, like her sisters in England, attends to her household matters in the morning, according to a regulated plan worked out for herself; trains her servants properly, and, having set the clock going for the day, expects the machinery to work. Every decent household should be managed on some such plan, and we all know that the busier the woman the more comfortable, as a rule, she makes her home; the mere fact of her having an occupation, inspires those about her to work. Added to which, the busy woman knows order and method are the only means by which satisfactory results can possibly be obtained, and that order and method which she has acquired herself she is able to teach her less-educated domestics. Idle people are always apparently busy, but it is the business of muddle, while really busy people always have time for everything, and keep everything in its place.

Finnish ladies are thoroughly well educated. They are musical and artistic, beautiful needlewomen, manage their homes well, and they have read enough to join in any discussion in which they take an interest. They are, consequently, treated by their husbands as equals, and although they have no political rights, women are much employed in government services. They are not debarred from becoming members of the great societies. For instance, among the 212 fellows that compose the Geographical Society of Finland there are 73 women, yet our Royal Geographical Society shrieked at the very idea of woman entering their portals.

The Swedish Literary Society, with 1300 members, has 82 women on its books. The same with the philanthropic

societies, music, art, etc. In all, the doors are open to women.

Ladies have done much for the cause of temperance, and in all philanthropic movements they are busy; they have organised schools for the deaf, dumb, blind, and crippled, and look after night shelters, mothers' unions, ragged unions, rescue homes, working homes for children, benevolent societies, etc.

The pamphlet, speaking of unmarried women, also says—

Rights of Unmarried Women enlarged.—In 1864 (on the 31st of October) *the position of unmarried women* was improved. According to the law that was then enacted, an unmarried woman—

1. When she has reached her fifteenth year, may take charge of whatever she may earn.

2. When she has reached her twenty-first year she may manage her own property, if she chooses to do so, provided that she informs the court of her intention.

3. When she has reached her twenty-fifth year she is of age, and may manage her own property without informing the court thereof.

Rights of Inheritance.—In the beginning of the Swedish rule our country probably conformed to the old Swedish laws and regulations, according to which women had a right to *inherit property* only in cases where there were no male heirs.

Legislation of Birger Jarl: Women inherited one-third.—In the middle of the thirteenth century, Finnish (as well as Swedish) women were awarded the right of inheriting *a third part* of the property left by their parents, whereas two-thirds accrued to the male heirs. For this improvement our women were indebted to Birger Jarl, the great Swedish legislator and statesman, who bears an honoured name in our history.

Many exceptions, however, were made to this rule. Where the father was a landowner, for instance, the principal estate always descended to the son, whereas the daughter had to be content with some smaller estate of less value, or with part of the personal property.

Legislation of 1734: Daughters and Sons of Town People, etc., inherit Equal Shares.—Such was the state of things for several centuries, till it was at last changed somewhat for the better when the law of 1734 came into force. This law decreed that the sons and daughters of commoners living in towns, and those of the clergy, were to inherit *equal shares.* The daughters of the nobility and of all landowners in the country, however, remained in the same position as before.

Law now in force: Daughters and Sons inherit Equal Shares.—This lasted nearly one and a half centuries, until in *all classes of society* the

daughters received the right of inheriting *equal shares* with the sons, which they did, according to a law enacted on 27th June 1878. *Hence Finnish women now possess the same rights of inheritance as men.* The latter, however, still in some cases have the advantage over women; *e.g.* where there is landed property to be inherited and the principal estate cannot be conveniently divided, then the brother or male heir is entitled to purchase the sister's part. The benefit thus accruing to the son injures the position of the daughter, in case the brother is a spendthrift or unable to pay the sum which represents her share of the paternal estate. Among the peasantry it is still customary to buy off the daughter with a small sum of money, regardless of what the true value of the estate may be, or with part of the personalty, so that the male heir may have the whole of the estate.

Divorce is somewhat uncommon in Finland. Indeed, next to Belgium, that country shows the smallest number of divorced marriages; still divorce may be granted on the following grounds:—

On the plea of adultery. It is not, however, enough for the guilty party to acknowledge his or her guilt, which must be fully proved, as well as the time when, the place where, and the person with whom, it was committed.

If either husband or wife have, after the betrothal but before the marriage, committed adultery with some one else, and this is made known after marriage, the innocent party may claim a divorce, if he or she demand it.

The law is in this respect severer with women than with men; for if a husband be informed of his wife having been seduced by some one else before her betrothal with him, he has the right to claim divorce from her, but the wife has not the same right *vice versâ*.

On the plea of deliberate desertion or prolonged absence. If either husband or wife absent himself or herself from home and do not return within a year after, the other party having inserted in the official newspapers of the country an advertisement calling on him or her to return, the one who remained at home has the right to sue for a divorce.

Far more marriages are marred by incompatibility of temper than by immorality, and, surely, if two people find they have made a mistake, and are irritants instead of sedatives to one another, they should not be left to champ and fret like horses at too severe a bit, for all their long sad lives—to mar one another's happiness, to worry their

children, and annoy their friends. Finland shows us an excellent example. The very fact of being able to get free makes folk less inclined to struggle at their chains. Life is intolerable to Mrs. Jones in Finland, and away she goes; at the end of a year Mr. Jones advertises three times in the paper for his wife, or for information that will lead to his knowing her whereabouts; no one responds, and Mr. Jones can sue for and obtain a divorce without any of those scandalous details appearing in the press which are a disgrace to English journalism.

If either husband or wife be sentenced to imprisonment for life.

Besides these cases, which are set forth in the law as sufficient causes for divorce, there are other circumstances in consequence of which a marriage may be dissolved,—but only by means of direct application to the Emperor and Grand Duke of Finland, who may grant it as a favour. A divorced wife is considered as a widow; she has no more duties toward her husband, and can dispose of her person as well as of her property. A divorced couple may peaceably settle all about the children; but if they cannot do this, the innocent parent is entitled to take charge of them. Both parents must contribute means for their maintenance and education.

POLITICAL RIGHTS

Women have no Political Rights.—In Finland, as well as in most other countries, *women have no political rights.* They have no vote, nor may they, as representatives of the people, take part in the political life. They are in duty bound to pay their taxes to the government, but they may not, in any lawful manner, exert an influence on the mode of spending the money collected by means of the taxes.

Politically the position of Finland is difficult, and as everything has to go before the Tzar, who would at once reject any laws sent up by women, the women rather hold back for the present, for fear of spoiling their chances later on. They have been patient, therefore, and only quietly worked for their franchise. Politically they have yet much to gain, but in the matter of education they have already acquired all.

Every woman entering the University must obtain permission from the Russian Chancellor. He always grants it now, though twenty years ago he often refused.

University education only costs about thirty-two shillings a year (forty marks), except in the case of chemistry, where a small extra charge is made for experiments. Men and women pay exactly the same, and enter for the same examinations, working side by side.

For the matriculation four languages are essential, and many take up five. Each year more students go over to the modern side.

The women of Finland have some municipal rights.

Unmarried women, if they are of age, widows, or divorced, provided they submit to the necessary conditions, have possessed since 1873 the right of municipal vote.

In Town Councils women may choose, but they may not be chosen; the same may be said of parochial affairs.

In 1893 it was decreed that women were eligible as members of School Boards in town and country.

Women can be trustees in cases of bankruptcy. Women can be guardians of children. Thus it will be seen there are many avocations for the fair sex.

Turning to education. There are many kinds of schools in Finland. *Kansakoulu*, or folk-schools, and *Kiertokoulu*, or elementary schools, are divided into two groups, the one comprising ambulatory schools for small children, under the supervision of the clergy and maintained by the parish. These "circular classes," if we may so call them, are quite a speciality of Finland. In thinly populated districts it would be impossible for young children to trudge weary miles to school, especially during the many months of snow, when there are 20 to 35° Celsius of cold, so ambulatory classes are held in the different villages. A few weeks' education has to suffice each year, and the teachers move on to the next little village. Reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught, and the cost to the parents is merely nominal.

The others are the folk-school proper (higher elementary school), maintained by the Communes and States jointly, and superintended by the Supreme School Council of *Helsingfors*.

The kindergartens are taught exclusively by women. There are in Finland 6853 Sunday schools with 147,134 pupils. Boys and girls are as usual taught together.

Uno Cygnæus in 1866 established the higher folk-schools. Children must enter between eight and twelve, and the course lasts four years. It was he who, in 1840, made the first move for the advancement of education, especially among women.

Course of Instruction.—Subjects of instruction and exercise in the folk-schools are the following:—

Religion; the reading of suitable books in the mother tongue, and the writing of it; geography and history; arithmetic and elementary geometry; natural science and its application; drawing, singing, gymnastics, *slojd*, and needlework.

In the country the four separate classes are very often taught by one teacher—male or female—and all at the same time.

Education is to-day far advanced. All the 36 town Communes possess one or more schools. Of the 466 country Communes 369 have permanent folk-schools (like board schools) to the number of 825.

The folk-schools in 1891 were attended by 22,673 girls, 27,433 boys, or a total of 50,106 children, which was more than 2·14 per cent of the population.

The country being sparsely populated the small percentage is easily accounted for.

In 1891 there were 731 female teachers and 654 male teachers in the folk-schools.

Females are paid less than males. In *Helsingfors* the women's salaries go as high as 1700 marks and men's to 2000 marks—less in the country districts; but all are entitled to a pension after thirty years' satisfactory teaching.

Beyond the folk-schools are practical continuation classes for needlework, cooking, weaving, household work, and book-keeping.

And then, again, there are People's Colleges for both sexes aged about eighteen, for the advancement of culture and knowledge, and to kindle noble impulses.

One of these People's Colleges was established by a woman for women, and has now obtained a grant out of the public funds.

Besides all the foregoing there are normal institutes or seminaries for folk-school teachers of both sexes. The instruction is free, and candidates must be eighteen years of age, and the subjects are:—Biblical history and the Bible, Christianity and moral philosophy, popular psychology, pedagogics and the science of teaching, school-keeping, the mother tongue and the reading of suitable works in it, the other language of the country, mathematics, geography, history, the statistics of Finland, natural history, calligraphy, writing of short essays, drawing and modelling, singing and instrumental music, elementary anatomy, physiology, the care of small children according to the laws of hygiene. To all this long list there are added for female students, instruction in needle-work and weaving, housekeeping, and gardening; and for the male, *slojd*, gardening, and fieldwork.

There are also State high schools for girls doing excellent work.

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The Amount of Salaries at the State High Schools for Girls.

	High Schools for Girls, with 7 Classes.			High Schools for Girls, with 5 Classes.		
	Number of lessons a week.	Salary. Marks, Finnish currency.	Salary increased after 20 years. Marks.	Number of lessons a week.	Salary. Marks, Finnish currency.	Salary increased after 20 years. Marks.
Lady principal (lodgings free of charge) . .	7	2800	4000	13	2000	3200
Teachers, female . . .	22	2200	3400	22	1800	3000
Assistant teachers (female). in drawing .	6	800				
calligraphy .				10	1000	
singing .	11	900		7	500	
gymnastics .	21	1800		15	1000	
Teachers, male (*kollega*) senior . . .		4000	6400		3600	6000
Teachers, male (*kollega*) junior . . .		3400	5800		3000	5400

In the matter of education, it will be seen, Finland is more advanced than in anything else. Women have absolutely equal rights with men in the field of learning; more than this, education for the masses is gratis, and for others merely nominal, the State bearing the brunt of the expenses, helped by taxes, according to individual wealth in various towns.

After six years of age, education is compulsory, and the police sometimes enforce the law. For seven years a child must attend school, passing through four standards; after that it need do no more, but a large number draft off to the higher schools, and later, if they like, to the University.

There are, as we know, mixed or co-educational schools for girls and boys, *Yhteiskoulu;* and in large towns like *Helsingfors* matters are arranged so that the upper and lower-class children attend distinct establishments; but

in small towns there are not enough gentry to support separate schools, consequently they become mixed in every sense. This has its disadvantages. As a lady said to us: "I dislike it very much; my son is in such a school, and he sits next one of our soldier's daughters, and, according to school etiquette, every one uses *thou*. This is all very well in school hours; but if I go to see the girl's mother, and take her a little soup or something, my boy and her girl naturally continue to address each other in the familiar form. I find it very awkward, and as I will not let my daughter, at all events, mix upon such intimate terms with the children of my servants all day long for years, I have a governess for her at home."

We sympathised with the mother's feelings, more especially knowing the exalted position she occupied as wife of one of the eight governors of Finland; but, at the same time, we felt it was much better to have one good school where the best instruction could be relied on, than to risk losing an educational battle by dividing the pecuniary forces.

Nevertheless, when those more gently born can be separated from the children of peasants, it is wise to do so, for how is the officer, the pastor, etc., to rule in later years men with whom he associated on equal terms during all the most impressionable years of life. Class distinctions no doubt have their faults, but they have also their advantages, and it is as well to respect them.

To be a school teacher in Finland is, as said before, almost the highest honour to which man or woman can attain, and every one speaks of this calling with the greatest respect; it is, in fact, a guarantee of learning and respectability. From a lady, who was director of a large mixed school, we learnt, that up to fifteen she considered the girls far in advance of the boys, but after that age the boys generally pulled up, and at eighteen, when they all went in for examinations, there was literally nothing to choose between the sexes. Mathematics being deemed the fence where a woman

generally comes to grief, we ventured to inquire what she thought of a girl's chances.

"Quite as good as a boy's. In fact, I find, as a rule, no difference in their papers, except that the girl's is neater and generally better written."

The first woman to take a degree at the University (*bacca laureate*) was *Fröken Emma Irene Aström* in 1873, when she was appointed professor (*lector*) at one of the seminaries for the education of folk-school teachers.

In 1884 the Finnish Women's Association was formed, having obtained permission from the State for their name. Their object is to work for the elevation of their sex, intellectually and morally, and to better women's social and economical position. One of their leaders is the able *Alexandra Gripenberg.*

Two years later branches began to be formed, and now there are several. It is the chief women's association, and does much good work, *especially to raise the standard of work and pay of the lower classes,* and to encourage their education.

A glance at the following table may be of interest:—

Female population in 1890 . . .	1,208,599
Male ,, ,, . . .	1,171,541

So in every thousand there are thirty-two more women than men.

The female population divides itself, according to age and civil position, in the following way:—

	Under 15.	15 to 25.	Over 25.	Total.
Unmarried . .	423,203	168,524	118,819	710,546
Married . .	..,	32,167	369,576	401,743
Widows or divorced	...	370	95,940	96,310
Total	423,203	201,061	584,335	1,208,599

Most women in trade support themselves by needlework. In the country the earnings are low, but then it must be borne in mind that food is *very* cheap.

In *Helsingfors* the workwomen earn as much as three marks a day without food. Those who work in the house receive from six to eight marks a week.

As tailors they only get half or three-quarters the wages paid to men, and the same remark holds good as regards shoemaking. Women are seldom furriers, but are no mean bookbinders, and often find employment in making hats, caps, etc., also as house-painters.

The following list, however, gives an almost exhaustive catalogue of the many trades women have mastered in Finland :—

Women's Trades.	Total number of women employed.
Spinning	2011
Weaving	1169
Needlewomen in towns	2451
,, in country	1057
Milliners in towns	84
Cloakmakers in towns	93
Tailoresses ,,	131
,, in country	141
Machine-knitters in towns	246
,, in country	35
Bookbinding in towns	144
,, in country	5
Hatters in towns	112
Cordmaking in towns	34
Dyers ,,	17
,, in country	10
Carpentering in towns	12
,, in country	3
Paperhangers in towns	10
,, in country	2
Watchmakers in towns	11
Goldsmiths ,,	20
Bakers ,,	558
,, in country	287
Slaughterers in towns	19
,, in country	1
Hairdressers in towns	9
Bath women ,,	297
,, in country	20

Women's Trades.	Total number of women employed.
Washing and mangling in towns	1136
Washing and mangling in country	32
Hotels and restaurants	353
Barmaids	92
Loading ships	765
Charwomen in towns	237
„ in country	24
Midwives (altogether)	425
Printing in towns	198
Bricklayers	550

Is there anything a Finnish woman cannot do?

On looking over the statistics of women employed in trades, one is pleased to see 17 women carpenters, and 22 paperhangers, as these trades are eminently fitted for women; but we sigh to find that 765 are employed "loading ships," which manual labour is very hard. One is surprised to notice that 21 women are slaughterers!

And 550 women are bricklayers. We certainly were amazed at *Wasa* to see them building houses, but they seemed to do their work very well.

Strangely enough, factories in Finland seem less attractive to women than is the case elsewhere, the reason for which may be found in the fact that, when engaged by the day or week, they only receive three-fourths or five-eighths of the wages paid to men.

In a *Kakel* factory (tiles), however, where piece-work is the rule, they can earn quite as much as men.

In match factories men and women have different sort of work assigned to them, consequently pay is different.

To sum up, we may say that the average woman's wage is 1 mark 25 penni a day, or about one English shilling a day.

From the subjoined table an idea may be gained of the number of women employed in factories and offices:—

Iron	90
Copper mines	20
Nail factory	12
Mechanical	40
China	92
Glass	120
Matches	373
Spinning	142
Cloth	428
Hosiery	211
Cotton	2648
Linen-spinning	724
Wood	391
Paper	804
Sawing	818
Cork	58
Building	4921
Breweries	297
Tobacco	1194
Druggists	26
Banks	160
Insurances	48
Agents	166
Telephonists	204

It is rather a fashion for the young ladies of Finland to go over to Sweden and enter what is called a *Hushållskola*, the literal translation of which is a household school, where they are taught cooking, laundry-work, weaving, dress-making, housemaid's work, everything, in fact, that a woman could possibly want to know if she were left without any servants, or even on a desert island. They are practically instructed how to garden, they are sent marketing, they are taught to fish, and, having landed their prey, how to clean and cook it. In fact, they are fitted to be maids-of-all-work, skilled labourers and sportsmen, at one and the same time!

The full course occupies about eighteen months, and has met with such success in Sweden that Finlanders are now organising such *Hushållskola* in Finland itself.

They have already started a cookery school in *Helsingfors*, a girl having been sent over to Sweden, England, and France

to learn the art. There are three kinds of classes—for peasants and servants the cost is 30 marks, or about 25s., for an eight weeks' course.

In 1799 one *Wibelcins* started a sort of technical education scheme. He printed books to further the weaving trade, gave prizes for spun thread, etc., to encourage the old trade then dying away—for women in the time of *Kalevala* wove, embroidered, spun, and worked in silver and bronze, at least so say the bards. Indeed, in 1529, *Åbo* linen was so celebrated that it was always used by the King of Sweden, therefore it is not surprising that weaving is quite a pastime among Finnish ladies, and every cottager knows how to ply her shuttle. Where it has fallen into disuse women go about the country to teach and revive the decaying industry.

It is very sad when old trades disappear in rural districts, for nothing can take their place. No modern factories are started near at hand to employ the folk, and the result is they give up their old occupations and too often do not take to new instead. For instance, the once famous lace of *Raumo*, formerly sent in large quantities to Sweden and Russia (the thread came from England), is now almost a forgotten art, as our own Honiton bids fair soon to become.

The many employments open to women do not make the more fortunate forget those in trouble. Nursing the sick is a favourite profession in Finland, the emolument varying from 200 to 600 marks per annum, in addition to board, etc.

Massage is a very old institution, so ancient that every village since the olden times has had at least one rubbing woman, as they call her. In the country they are generally given food in payment, but in towns from 25 penni to 1 mark for the time occupied. So many women do massage that really every one seems to know something about it, and one almost feels that massage must have originated in *Suomi*.

In public offices Finnish women hold important

positions. They are magistrates, policemen (in the office, not out of doors), secretaries, directors of large institutions, *i.e.* public kitchens, reading-rooms, etc. Further, women are employed as cashiers, book-keepers, and serve in shops; their pay varying from 120 to 1600 marks a year, according to their positions.

Women are largely employed in banks, their pay ranging from 600 to 4000 marks; few, however, receive more than 1500 marks. Women are employed in insurance offices as agents and commissioners, and earn from 300 to 1500 marks.

Women have almost a monopoly of the telephone. In *Helsingfors* the highest salary for such work is 1440 marks a year.

Sometimes, when acting as dock labourers, loading ships, etc., Finnish women receive men's pay; but more often only about half, viz. 1 mark 15 penni against 2 or 3 marks per diem, though they do the same work.

Women are much in request as compositors. At this trade they can earn 30 to 100 marks, sometimes even 150 marks a month.

The number of women in the service of Government are—

137 Railway employees, booking-clerks, etc. (employed since 1869).
51 Senate of Finland („ 1868).
5 Central Bureau for Statistics.
12 Land Survey.
5 Board of Works.
15 Custom House.
10 Courts of Appeal as copyists.
54 Employed in prisons.
253 Post-Office. (Ten as heads of departments).
204 Telephonists.

In all, 849 women are paid by the State, of which number 687 are unmarried, 62 married, and 100 widows or divorced.

But it would be tedious to enumerate all the posts held by women in Finland, so we will only add there are nearly 100 employed in municipal offices, such as Town

Councils, City Courts, Police Courts, Boards of Finance, Public Libraries, etc.

Servants in Finland are often engaged by the year—like the old term (six months) formerly so universal in Scotland—but in the cities a month is more frequent.

In the towns wages are always paid in money, but in the country partly in clothing. Cooks are the best paid. Wages are low.

In *Women and Women's Work* we find that—

Finland's earliest authoress was Sarah Wacklin (born in 1790, died in 1846). In her *Hundra Minnen från Österbotten* (A Hundred Memories from Oesterbotten), published in 1844-45, she describes life in the far North toward the end of the last and in the beginning of this century. Independent of its literary merit, this work, containing descriptions of historical personages and events, is valuable as a chronicle of customs and manners.

Here in Finland, as well as in Scandinavia, the female authors have been, since the middle of the century, deeply influenced by the problem of the emancipation of women, which forms such a prominent feature of modern society. This problem has been introduced into several works of fiction, and has been treated at greater or less length in many treatises, essays, and pamphlets. The first Finnish authoresses who wrote on the subject of the emancipation of women were Fredrika Runeberg and Adelaïde Ehrnroth.

Mrs. Fredrika Runeberg (born 1807, died 1879) was the wife of our greatest poet, J. L. Runeberg. In her *Teckningar och Drömmar* (Sketches and Dreams), published in 1861, she gave utterance to many a thought and opinion on the relations of women to men and to society, so much in advance of her time that they have hardly become general even now. Her *Fru Katharina Boije och hennes Döttrar* (Mrs. Catharine Boije and her Daughters) is one of our best historical novels. It was published in 1858.

A strong protest against the oppression and the injustice which have for centuries hindered the development of woman and kept her, from a social point of view, all her life as if she were a minor, forms the keynote in all Miss Adelaïde Ehrnroth's writings. Her *nom de plume* is *A-ï-a*, and she has had conferred upon her the French honorary title of *Officier d'Académie*. She is the first Finnish woman who has bravely fought the cause of women in numerous newspaper articles, treatises, and pamphlets. Even in her works of fiction, in the descriptions of her journeys, etc., she never loses sight of this favourite topic. She has published several novels, sketches, and books of travel.

Few Finnish women have devoted themselves to lyric poetry; but

among the few we may mention Miss Wilhelmina Nordström (born 1815), whose poems were published in 1861.

When we went to *Koupio* we hoped to meet *Minna Canth*, one of the first Finnish writers in the country, whose powers as a dramatist we had learnt at *Sordavala*. We inquired where she lived, and found that she had a drapery store.

Every one in Finland works in some way, and, all work being considered honourable, the shopkeeper is equal to the noble.

Minna Canth's husband died some years ago, and being left with a family, she started this store, and, certainly, when one realises that she is a woman with children to look after, that she writes much—which we all know takes some time —it is perfectly wonderful how she can find energy and leisure to look after her shop. Yet it is so, and the business is in a most flourishing condition.

Unfortunately *Minna Canth* was away on her holiday, and so, although we saw her home, we were not able to make the personal acquaintance of a very interesting woman.

Finnish lady artists for the first time received international prizes and medals at the great World's Exhibition in Paris in the year 1889. Prizes were awarded to the following ladies: Miss Helen Schjerfbeck (born 1862), and Miss Elin Danielson (born 1861), who received the third medal, Venny Soldan (born 1860), and Helena Westermarck (born 1857), who received the "*mention honorable.*"

Among painters of a somewhat earlier date than the above-mentioned, we may name Miss Victoria Åberg (born 1824, died 1892), who had the title of Academical Artist at the Academy of Art in St. Petersburg, and Miss Fanny Churberg (born 1845, died 1892).

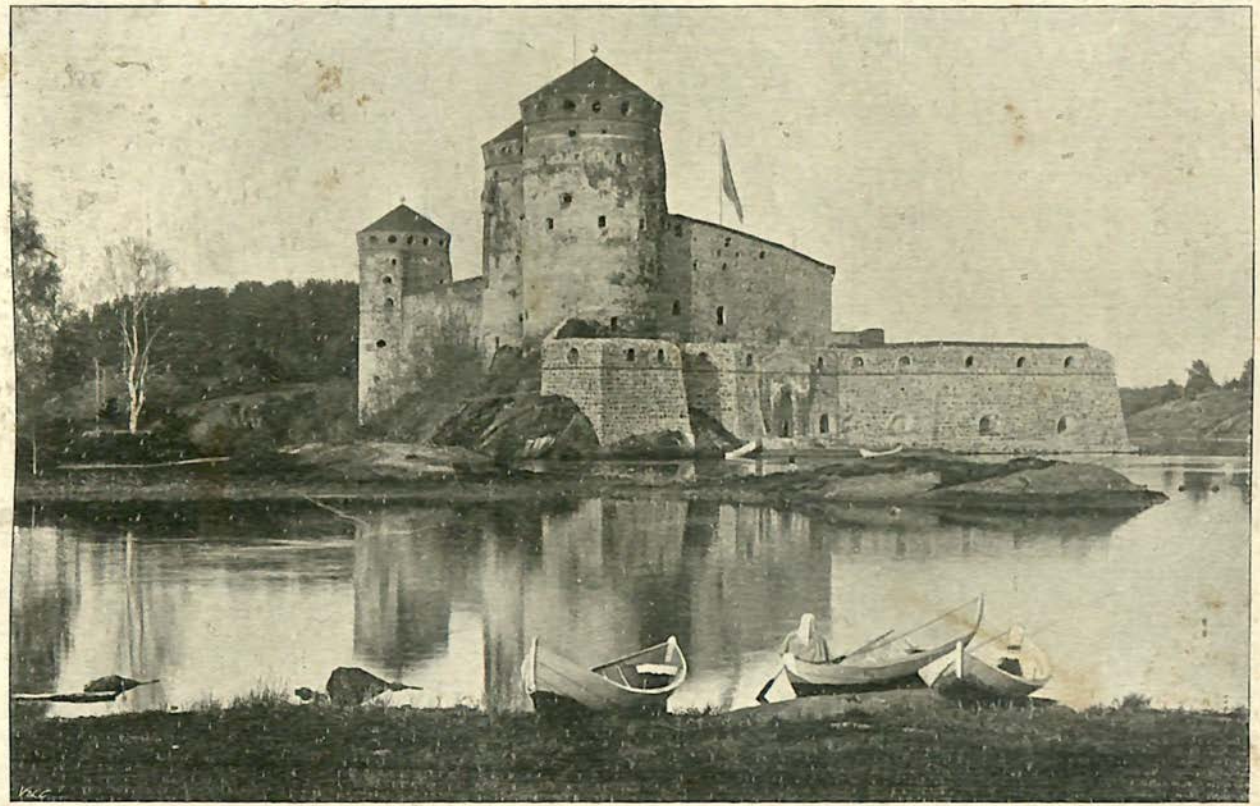
Many of Finland's living lady artists have exhibited pictures at the *Salon* in Paris—*e.g.* Miss Maria Wiik (born 1853), Miss Amelie Lundahl (born 1850), Mrs. De Cock

Stigzelius (born 1840), Miss Annie af Forselles (born 1863), Miss Dagmar Furuhjelm (born 1868), and others.

Very few Finnish women have as yet devoted themselves to sculpture, and only one, Miss Sigrid af Forselles (born 1860), has accomplished any really valuable work.

Readers glancing over these statistics must never lose sight of the fact that the entire population of Finland is barely two and a half millions.

The future of that country will be the outcome of its enlightened system of education, for the learning of the mothers will benefit sons lying in their cradles to-day.



NYSLOTT—OUR HAUNTED CASTLE

CHAPTER XI

A HAUNTED CASTLE

THE bells rang! It was 4 A.M. when the ship *Concordia*, which had been our home for thirty-six hours, arrived at *Nyslott*, one of the small towns which are sparsely scattered over Finland.

Nyslott is famous for two things. Its very modern "bath cure" accompanied by a "kasino"—of which French watering-places need have no jealousy—and, by way of extreme from such modernity, its other attraction is an old ruined castle, built originally in 1475. The castle is the most perfect left in Finland, and its position is certainly the most picturesque, for it stands quite alone on an island of rock, round which the current forms endless whirlpools. It is built with sharp buttresses, and once had five towers, of which, alas, only three remain, but those three are very perfect.

What stories that castle could tell of wars and sieges, of Russian and Swedish possessors, of Catholic and Lutheran sway, and of cruelty too horrible to dwell upon, although one cannot help realising its possibilities after entering the little dark cell in which two men were built up to live together in darkness and in hunger till death ended their sufferings.

The Roman Catholic Chapel still remains; windowless, save for a small hole over the stone altar, which certainly suggests artificial light having been thrown from behind on some sacred relic or picture—a theatrical effect not un-

known to that faith. Its uneven stone floor, and its niches for the sacramental cup, all remain in weird darkness to remind one of ages long gone by. In turn the Castle has been Catholic, Lutheran, and Greek—so three persuasions have had their sway, and each has left its mark.

Our thoughtful friend, Grandpapa, whom we had left a fortnight before at *Rättijärvi* was waiting for us at *Nyslott*, or rather, a moment after the ship stopped at the quayside he arrived, accompanied by a man in a boat, one of those regular Finnish boats pointed at each end and called a *kuirn*.

"Where are we to live?" we called, over the side.

"In the Castle, as you wished," was the reply; and overjoyed at the prospect of anything so romantic, we quickly transferred ourselves and our baggage into the boat below.

"I'm very anxious about this arrangement," said our friend. "When I arrived a fortnight ago, and found there was not a room to be had in the town, I was in despair; after wandering from house to house, again I beseeched the little hotel to take me in; but even their sofas were occupied. However, determining not to leave *Nyslott* till I had seen the famous castle, I got a boat and rowed across. *Veni, vidi, vici*—for I persuaded the watchman to put me up for the night, and there I am still. When, yesterday, I could find no habitation for you, I telegraphed that the town was full and I was only put up by the *Vahktimestari* of the Castle. Imagine my horror when I got your reply—'*Arrive* 4 *A.M., arrange stay Castle.*'"

"Were you so very much horrified?" we laughed. "We thought it would be such fun, and so delightfully romantic."

"It was no fun to me. I felt utterly taken aback, and went off to consult an artist friend, who was painting the queer old place.

"'Nonsense, my dear fellow,' he said, 'you can't lodge ladies in this barrack. It's all very well for two watchmen,

or for you, if you like, to rough it—but ladies—nonsense, it is impossible.'

"'But,' I remarked, 'they are very enterprising, and one of them, who is writing a book, loves queer corners, odd experiences, and native life.'

"'I daresay,' replied he, 'but this Castle, I repeat, is impossible, especially for Englishwomen, who are all accustomed to much luxury.'

"Back into the town I went again to try for rooms, but without success. What was to be done; you were on the way, time was growing short, and I had arranged nothing. So once more to my watchman I returned and told him my awful dilemma, and the depths of my despair. He so thoroughly entered into the spirit of the thing, that he promised to do the best he could, and in an hour's time he had arranged for extra towels and a few necessaries to be sent over from the town."

"Delightful," we exclaimed; "what a dear man! It is like a romance in a story book."

"But my story is not finished," Grandpapa replied, with a rueful face; "we had set to work to sweep, and brush, and clean with a will, in order to make the room more worthy of its occupants, when the *Vahktimestari* suddenly said—

"'I'm afraid, after all, you will have to go and get permission from the Mayor, or I may get into trouble for allowing ladies to sleep in this ruined Castle.'"

Here was an adventure. Our hearts quailed a little as we waited breathlessly for the finish of the story.

"I got into the boat," went on our friend, "pulled on shore, and set off to the Mayor in order to obtain permission for you to sleep there. At first he sternly refused.

"'Ridiculous,' he said, 'bats and owls, goblins and ghosts! that is not a fit home for ladies—ridiculous, and quite impossible.'

"I explained and argued, and at last he gave in, saying, 'Well, the old castle has withstood many sieges, and it is

hard it must give in without powder or shot to two Englishwomen.'

"Thus his reluctant permission was granted, and away I came triumphant. You are to have the watchmen's room, they the kitchen, and I am to sleep in the Lutheran Church, which chances to have a roof."

We were delighted, and at once started for our haunted Castle! We rowed along to our island home, and, when we appreciated the difficulty of steering through the fast-running whirlpool to the only gate with its fine portcullis, we realised we were indeed on adventure bent.

It was barely dawn, and as we swept over the seething waters, and stood under the ancient archway, we felt like Mary Queen of Scots before the gates of Fotheringay.

We were indeed triumphantly triumphant. Far from the whistle of a train, right in the interior of Finland, standing beneath the portals of a very famous castle virtually ruined and uninhabited—we felt at home!

The streaks of early morning sunlight lent enchantment to the romantic surroundings, as we wandered along queer passages where the walls varied from five to fifteen feet thick, peeped into cellars and dungeons, and bending our heads under Norman arches, at last entered the first courtyard. We saw mysterious winding staircases, generally spiral, leading up and down into deep dark mystery. Certainly so far the ruins did not look as though they would protect any one from wind and rain, and we passed on, through walls that seemed impregnable, to ruined chambers, in and out of which pigeons were flying happily at their sweet will.

The second courtyard was gravelled; but round its sides tangled beds of syringa in full flower, red and black currants nearly ripe, pretty wild roses and lilac almost looked homely, while white and yellow marguerites shadowed dear little wild strawberries, and a general air of naturalness prevailed. We had reached the very centre of our enchanted castle! How often had this courtyard been the

scene of revelry, of tournaments and joustings, at which lovely woman had smiled and distributed her favours from the surrounding battlements.

"There is your room," exclaimed Grandpapa at last, pointing to a modern little bit of building erected for the custodian's use, in which, sure enough, was a real glass window.

Up the modern steps we mounted to find a nice big room, poorly furnished, 'tis true, with one bed and a garden seat, two wooden chairs and a long wooden bench, a table on which stood a brown earthenware bowl, and a large glass water carafe, that glass bottle which had haunted us since we set foot in Finland! The bench was to do duty for washstand and the impedimenta thereto. The wooden floor was delightfully scrubbed, and what mattered the simplicity when all was so delightfully clean?

Lo and behold, a bouquet of flowers stood in a tumbler on the table, the votive offering of the Finnish custodian himself; a charming welcome to his English visitors!

Out of this large bare chamber led a dear little kitchen, and farther along a passage and up some stairs we came to the old church—capable of seating a couple of hundred persons, although it did not really possess a single seat—which was to serve as Grandpapa's bedroom. Churches invariably do so even to-day in Iceland, where hotels are practically non-existent, except in two or three instances, and even habitations are few and far between.[1]

So this was to be for a brief space our home; a real, wild, weird, romantic home, seated on its rocky island away from the world, away from every sign of life save pigeons or bats; full of grim spirits—if tradition were to be believed—and nightly walked by strange ladies and blood-stained men—for stories there are in plenty concerning the great Castle of *Olavin Linna* as the Finns call it, at *Savonlinna*, the Finnish name for *Nyslott*.

[1] *A Girl's Ride in Iceland.*

We wandered everywhere: we peered into all the mysteries! Mounting to an upper floor by the solid stone steps outside, we found ourselves in another chamber, the roof of which was supported by rafters, from which a long dark passage led us round two sides of the courtyard, passing a small tower by the way from which we could see yet another court, whose wide grass-grown ramparts overhung the rapidly-flowing current of the lake.

Here was the hall of the knights, a long and dark chamber—so dark, in fact, that we wondered how any one had ever been able to see clearly in it. On all sides were rooms and pitch-black dungeons, for at the time the Castle was built (1475) the powers that were thought nothing of shutting people up in dark little holes, where they left them to die, and the *Olavin Linna* seems to have been particularly rich in such choice chambers. From where we stood, a few steps up a winding staircase led us to a big tower containing a large round room, called the ladies' drawing-room. The dames of that period certainly had a glorious view all round for miles and miles, although they were far removed from the life going on below. From this point of vantage we saw how the Castle literally covered the whole of the rock, and occupied a most commanding position where three lakes met. As we wandered down again, we chanced into a queer sort of chamber, wherein half a dozen weird straggling trees struggled to exist. It was almost dark; the storms of winter could rustle through those blank windows, and the trees were white, and gray, and sickly—more like phantoms than real trees—so queer and withered and pale were their leaves, and yet they stood eight or ten feet high, so they had grown.

After having thus gained a general idea, snatched a sort of bird's-eye view of this strange Castle, we returned to our room and investigated its capabilities.

There was *one* bed, already honourably mentioned, and a garden seat—one of those well-known benches made of

thin wooden laths, with a rounded uncomfortable seat and back.

"Could we manage with such meagre accommodation?" Grandpapa asked timorously, "or must another bed be hired; that is to say, if another bed can be hired, or bought in a town already overcrowded!"

We looked at our friend's troubled face, and, feeling we had already caused him a sad amount of inconvenience, valiantly replied, "We will manage." And manage we did!

To the "elderly scribe" was allotted the bed, a very finely carved wooden erection; but let me at once own that, although I had slept on hay in a tent in other lands, passed a night on a dining-room table, several on the floor, deck-chairs, etc., I never slept in anything quite so "knobby" as that extraordinary bed. A lump here, and a lump there, always seemed to select the most inconvenient part of one's frame to stick in, and sometimes getting on a nerve quite numbed the spot. After the first night I asked the *Vahktimestari* to turn and knead the mattress, which he cheerfully promised to do, and no doubt did. But all his turning and pounding was perfectly useless, so after a second restless night, which left me beautifully black and blue from head to foot, I determined to investigate the mysteries of that bed for myself.

When I removed the under sheet a bewildering problem was solved. On the top of the mattress lay an enormous coat, lined throughout with black sheepskin. Its double-rolled collar had made a huge ridge down the middle of my back, across which a thick waist-belt had not unsuccessfully tried to form a bridge—the sleeves could only be accounted mountains, while innumerable buttons had left their impress on every inch of my body! I felt very sorry for my flesh that morning!

Four nights passed on a hard garden seat does not sound entrancing, nevertheless, on such a non-captivating couch, my sister, helped by rugs and a pillow, slept the sleep of the just.

Her "plank bed" may have been—nay, certainly must have been—hard, and the Castle primitive, but everything, bedding included, was spotlessly clean, and, after all, cleanliness and a quiet conscience compensate for much—anyhow she slept; that is a fact for which I can vouch.

During the first night of our stay at *Nyslott* one of us lay and dreamed a semi-waking dream, in which the old rock—Nature's fortress—appeared in the lake bleak, bare, grim, and lonely until 1475, when the first stones of *Olavin Linna* were laid. After that the scene suddenly shifted, and the bloody battles of 1743, when *Nyslott* was taken by the Russians, were again fought for the benefit of a new spectator, only, as it seemed, for the Castle to be given back four years later to Finland! A very curious reminiscence to occur to any person's mind between "sleeping and waking." Later on, that over-tired traveller mused dreamily on the three periods of history, pictured scenes during the two hundred and sixty-eight years of Swedish sovereignty, the century under Russian sway, and twenty-four years under Finnish rule, for its troubles practically ended in 1871, from which date they have been but a souvenir in the history of Europe.

Olavin Linna was the spot around which three different races met and struggled; the Russians, the Finns, and the Swedes. The Russians with their superior numbers, their riches, and their sharpness, pushed the Finns towards the North and took their country, the now northern half of Russia in Europe. The Swedes came and conquered the Slavs; founded a dynasty, and called their State Russia (*i.e.* Sweden, *Ruotsi* being the Finnish name for Sweden to this day). The Swedes also conquered the remaining part of ancient Finland, and introduced Christianity, and the strong and freedom-loving Scandinavian law.

The struggle now remained between the Scandinavians and the Slavs—between a democratic and courageous race and an oligarchic and diplomatic one. Then our Castle—our own—for had we not conquered it—was built on the

frontier to resist the inroads of the Slavs. But again the Russians were triumphant. Sweden succumbed, while Russia took the remainder of ancient Finland. Since then Russia has become a great power.

Alexander I. granted to that part of Finland, imbued with Scandinavian law, the privilege of considering itself a nation, and continuing its former laws and government. Under this state of things the country grew prosperous. It arose and shook itself from its dormant existence of the previous six hundred years, collected its own traditions, and worked hard for education, so that it might continue a distinct race.

Then was built the large modern red brick school-house at *Savonlinna*—a fortress of learning to take the place of the old Castle, and to teach the people that "the pen is indeed mightier than the sword."

One of us twain dreamed again! Saw the Castle built by *Erik Tott*, a member of one of the greatest Finnish-Swedish families, and read the inscription—

Anno Domini 1475 leth iag Erik Axelsson Ridder i Lagnö, bygia thette Slåt, Gud till loff, Christum, helga Christna tro till styrkielse, och thå var hustru min Elin Gotstaffsdotter i Lagmansöö.

Translation—

Anno Domini 1475 let Erik, son of Axel Knight of Lagnö, build this Castle to the Glory of God, to strengthen the Holy Christian Faith in Christ: and then was my wife's name Elin, daughter of Godstaff in Lagmansöö.

That weary traveller saw the indignation at its erection at *Nyslott*, just within the Russian limits of the frontier, saw the five splendid towers finished, of which three now remain, and the *Bastion Dick* properly rebuilt.

And then all grew suddenly dark, and, in a deeper sleep, that dreamer groped along the gloomy subterranean passage, said to run from the clock tower to the town, seemed to hear the rushing water, 120 feet deep at this point, tearing like a cataract overhead, peered into those many strange

dark chambers, and hearkened, appalled, to the piercing shrieks of those two wretched men bricked up together in yonder small chamber, in darkness till death brought relief.

What a life, and what a death! Four stone walls round a room about 6 feet by 10—with an earthen floor and a low ceiling—no window for light, no stove for warmth in that bitterly cold land.

Half waking from troubled slumber the weary traveller shivered to think of the horror that had been enacted so close to her elaborately carved bedstead and its lumpy mattress.

How hot it still was! The day had been almost tropical, but it is a merciful provision of Providence that all days, even one beginning at 4 A.M., must end at last, and as I, the nineteenth century traveller, the "elderly scribe," aroused myself sufficiently to shake off those terrible visions of a cruel past, I realised it was getting on for midnight. I heard our friend going to rest in his chapel-chamber, and, turning over, tried to go really to sleep. How quiet everything was! Except for the gnawing of the rats or mice under the floor—no unusual sound in an old castle, of course—and so unconsciousness came—till———

Ah! what was that! Was it? yes, it was—some one calling; and yet it could not be.

The custodians had retired to their kitchen to rest I knew, for had I not heard them trudging upstairs to seek their improvised couches long before, and yet, most certainly, a loud strange call had broken the silence of night. Was it really uttered by a human being, or could it be — no, no, of course not. A spirit? Ridiculous! The very idea was preposterous, and, lying down again, I argued how absurd were such fears, how I had been simply dreaming; over-fatigued after a long day's travel—how, in fact, my mind was disorganised, and the best thing to do was to fall asleep at once. At that moment a

tremendous peal of thunder broke overhead, while, simultaneously, the whole room was flooded with light. It played over the walls, it danced over the floor, and then a clap more tremendous than the first seemed to shake the very building. Yet through the roll of heaven's artillery I heard that weird cry distinctly audible.

Starting up again in response, I began to think sleeping in a haunted castle was not such fun after all; that there *must be* something very uncanny about *Nyslott*, more especially when a strange door creaked on its hinges, that sort of rasping squeak one associates with the opening of a door generally kept firmly closed—and muffled feet pattered over the stairs.

Nearer came the sound, nearer, yet nearer. My heart jumped into my mouth, it ceased almost to beat as the strange footsteps stopped on the very threshold of our room. "Oh!" I gasped, thinking that in another moment a spirit hand would turn the handle, and a ghostly figure enter the room. What form would it take? Would the phantom be man or woman—tall or short—an assassin, murderer, or victim? Yes, the steps had ceased at our door, and the next moment they would be upon us.

But after that brief pause the muffled patter passed on, and again all was still.

What a relief! it was perhaps nothing after all—imagination, hallucination probably, but nothing real—nothing any way to fear.

Stay though! The voice, a voice, another voice unheard before spoke in murmured accents, and then a deeper bass than that which had previously called, shouted again and again in reply.

This was too horrible!

It must be a ghost; nay, not even a single ghost but two, and what chance had one poor living woman against such odds from the spirit land?

The whole thing, even at *Nyslott*, seemed too terribly impossible; so I pinched myself to make sure I was awake,

only to hear the awful footsteps—duplicated—*coming back!* By this time my sister was awake, and lazily asking "What is the matter?"

"H-st-st," I answered, under my breath.

Thud, thud—the mysterious footsteps drew nearer and nearer—

They were almost again at our door, when absolutely petrified by fear, and clammy by reason of the awful *Nyslott* stories we had been told, we twain sat up in bed feeling creepy and cold all over.

The footsteps came on apace, and we held our breath, thinking our time had come; but was it? could it be? Yes, yes, thank heaven it was! We recognised the voice of *our own custodian talking softly to his comrade.*

It was no ghost after all! only the under *Vahktimestari* who, having been spending the evening on shore, shouted as usual to be admitted. It was his strange voice echoing through those empty corridors that had waked us from our first sleep. His cries not being heard by reason of thunder roaring and rolling, he had called and called again with increasing energy till admitted.

What an unromantic ending to a most weird story, with every surrounding at hand, every element ready, except the actual ghost himself! A happy ending. Stay, now it is over, I almost wish the ending had been less happy and more romantic.

Woman is seldom satisfied, and man never! One woman however, I am not ashamed to say, was never in all her previous life so frightened as during that midnight hour at *Nyslott.*

Happy days followed after this terrifying episode. We explored dark chambers with a candle and matches, we cooked coffee on the stove for breakfast, and boiled eggs in an enormous tea-kettle, aided in our pleasant toil by two smiling much-interested watchmen, and afterwards ate our meal among tangled shrubs in a courtyard shaded from the sun's heat by a linden tree.

We idled generally; wrote letters, scribbled up our diaries, chatted or made sketches in the *Bastion Dick* with its eight windows, each of which are at the narrow end of a wall measuring 15 feet thick, thus forming the recesses of a large octagonal chamber with long benches stretching down the side of each of the 15 feet walls. A wondrous and remarkable hall, always cool even on a hot day, with its windowless lookouts over that beautiful lake.

Up the centre of this huge hall was a column of solid masonry coming from the chamber below, and rising some 30 feet to support the arched roof.

We enjoyed it all; but, be it owned, the life was very primitive, and to many people would have seemed ghastly.

For dinner (which is always between two and four in Finland), we were obliged to cross to the *Kasino* or *Societet-shuset* (Hotel), our commissariat and *chef de cuisine* not rising to the requirements of such a meal.

We learnt how ugly ordinary small Finnish towns are, with their one-storey wooden houses, ill-paved roads, totally devoid of side paths—how very like cheap wooden Noah's arks, such as children have, these towns really are; all straight and plain with glaring windows painted round with white paint. No gardens of any kind, while every casement is blocked with a big india-rubber plant. Generally a huge stone or brick school-house, large enough to contain all the thousand inhabitants in the district, instead of the town's 200 children, but then it is built ready for contingencies!

All this hideous inartistic modernity contrasted sadly with the massive beauty and vast strength of our castellated home.

Nyslott, as already said, is famous for its baths, which are a great institution, and charmingly arranged—douche baths, steam, mud, swimming, etc., and about forty or fifty little private rooms, some containing sofas,—and at least a dozen women to attend to the comfort of visitors. They are regular Finnish bathing-women, wearing the ordinary uniform of their calling, viz. a thick blue serge skirt, red

flannel outside stays, opening at the lacing in front and showing the white cotton chemise that is *de rigueur*, cut low at the neck, and with quite short sleeves, a very pretty simple dress that allows great freedom to the arms when massaging, one of the important items of every Finnish bath.

We always returned to our castellated home for our evening meal, and, armed with a basket containing sardines, bread, butter, cold tongue, or ham, delicious cakes or fruit for dessert, we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.

Our table in the courtyard was gray with age, and notched with the initials of young Philistines of former generations. We had no cloth, why should we; our forefathers ate without cloths and were happy nevertheless. We had a large brown earthenware pot, such as is used as a bread pan in England, at the head of the table filled with milk, which we served by dipping a cup into its depths. A mat of birch bark was our bread trencher, a cabbage leaf our butter dish, for although we had plates and knives and forks, cups and tumblers, there were not enough to accommodate the many articles displayed upon our liberal board.

The pigeons generally joined us at our meal, and seemed to know when we sallied forth in solemn procession, each with a black tin tray, what coming event was casting its shadow before, for they began to arrive whenever they heard the first rattle of cups and saucers. Our feathered friends guessed intuitively scraps would immediately follow that pleasant music, more delectable than any the Castle had hitherto furnished.

Never was there a more strange sleeping-chamber than the old church where Grandpapa reposed on a mattress on the floor. It was a long narrow room with windows on both sides, the only place which boasted real windows except our own room, and the wee kitchen in that rambling old *Olavin Linna*.

This church had been Catholic, Lutheran, and Greek,

and then Lutheran again; all that remained of decoration were the remnants of an altar at the far end, above which hung a large picture of the crucifixion, and below a representation of the Lord's Supper; both badly painted, if one might judge from the scant colour remaining on the canvas. On one side stood a pulpit with a top like an extinguisher, much the worse for wear; formerly it had been painted all over with bright colours, the panels of the saints being surrounded by garish festoons and queer designs. In the opposite corner of the room was a very remarkable representation of Our Lord, with the five foolish virgins on one side, and the five wise ones on the other. It was a truly wonderful picture, for all the arms were out of drawing and all the heads too big for the bodies, and every one of the faces hideous. But even more wonderful than all the rest was the dado painted on a wooden panelling which ran round the church. The background was pale green, and the persons represented were prophets, apostles, and saints in the most rude form of art. Finnish art about 150 years ago closely resembled the very earliest examples known of the Italian, only it was yet a hundredfold more primitive. But then, we presume, the village artist had never really seen a good picture in his life, and had nothing to go by.

On the panels were the following:—

P. Isak (*P.* meaning the Prophet), dressed in a blue kilt, with black top boots, a red cape, and a black billycock hat!

P. Jacob, who was next to him, wore brown knickerbockers and long stockings, a red and blue plaid, and a red felt hat.

P. Samuel had a hat like a Jewish Rabbi and a long black cloak.

Judas Iskariot a most wonderful red head and beard, and carried in his hand a Finnish peasant's tobacco pouch.

But the most wonderful was *Noak* or Noah in blue and white tartan knickerbockers with a short kilt above them, carrying a red cloak and black slouch hat *over his arm*.

At the end of the room, opposite the altar, was a sort of wide wooden stair, on which prisoners used to sit during service at the commencement of this present century.

We bathed in that hot weather from the rock on which *Nyslott* is built, and enjoyed the cool water amazingly. To find a safe spot, however, from which to make our plunge proved a difficulty, and one we had to solve for ourselves.

Leaving the main and only entrance, and descending some wide steps leading to the water edge, bathing dresses and towels in hand, we found a little ledge of stone-work barely twelve inches broad, just above the level of the lake. Literally only a foothold! Any nervous person inclined to turn giddy would hardly have dared to venture along such a path at all. But it led to the only spot where we could stand on solid earth outside the Castle walls, so completely did the edifice cover the rock on which it was built. A gust of wind at the turn of the tower almost blew us over, it was so sudden and unexpected!

After climbing on in this way for a short while we came to a little cove between two towers, with enough land for three or four trees to find soil to grow on, and beneath them a perfect bed of wild strawberries. It was a very small and very primitive bath chamber, but trees afforded shade from the sun's powerful rays, and two massive walls shut us in from curious eyes.

Near the Castle gate the water was smooth, but the current round other parts of the battlements was great, and almost baffled the wonderful swimming powers of Grandpapa and the delightful student who joined us at *Nyslott*, fresh from his newly-won honours at the University. They swam round it—but they had a struggle to accomplish their feat.

Our student was a great acquisition to the party, though many scenes we lived together were not altogether devoid of embarrassment. He knew no language that we knew! For his University work he had learned book-German, and could

read it well, but he had never heard it spoken, and his tongue had never framed the words. Still, with this solid foundation, we soon taught him, and at the end of the three weeks that he spent with us, we flatter ourselves his German was *excellent!* Many a laugh we had over his deliciously amusing struggles, and, in spite of being a Finlander, he laughed too!

We also had many quaint linguistic adventures with our "hotel keeper."

That custodian was a poet—a real live poet. He used to disappear for hours; and we wondered where he was, until one fine day, as we rowed home to our enchanted castle, we saw a man on the top of the watch tower waving his arms and gesticulating with dramatic gestures into space. This was our *Vahktimestari.* From his exalted position, with one of the most beautiful panoramas eye could wish lying at his feet—resting on a famous battlement, that had withstood the ravages of love and war—he evolved his magic verse. Truly no scene could be more inspiring, no motive more sublime, for even we humble humdrum matter-of-fact Englishwomen felt almost inspired to tempt the poet's muse. But happily no — our friends are spared — the passion was but fleeting.

One day our *Vahktimestari* met us all smiles. We could not quite understand what he meant, but Grandpapa and our student told us some strange news as soon as the *Vahktimestari* had imparted it to them.

It seemed that a party of people had rung the bell on the shore for the Castle boat to go to fetch them, so, accordingly, our nocturnal ghost had gone across to earn his penny per head for ferrying them over. A papa, mamma, son, and daughters, with a couple of acquaintances, comprised the party. They calmly owned they had not come to see the Castle—they had seen it before. They had come to see the English ladies. Was it really true that two Englishwomen were staying there as the papers stated? Had they actually come from London? What were they like?

What did they do? And why on earth did they sleep among the ghosts and hobgoblins?

Then, in a hushed voice and with subdued breath they asked—

"Are they mad?"

"No," the man answered, "he didn't think they were, they seemed much like other folk."

"Could they talk."

"Not Finnish; but they understand Swedish, and talk French and German with their friends."

"Did they do anything very remarkable or strange?"

"No. They cook their breakfast, and afterwards eat it; write, work, sketch, and bathe; in fact, they are ordinary people and seem quite sane."

"Could they see the strange ladies?"

"He was afraid not, as they were on shore."

"Might they see where they slept?"

"Certainly," replied the *Vahktimestari.*

And on reaching the room they exclaimed—

"Why, this is an ordinary room with windows, how very disappointing," whereupon, much distressed and disillusioned, they turned and departed.

At this very time we were walking on the promenade in front of the bath-houses, where a nice fat comfortable-looking old gentleman stood before me, and cap in hand asked in English—

"Excuse me, do you like Finland?"

"Very much," I replied, smiling at the question; "but why do you ask?"

"I am a Finn—we all are Finns, and we are very proud of our country, about which most of Europe knows nothing, or at least next to nothing, and I am desirous to hear what you think of it all?"

"I am delighted with it. But again I must ask why you inquire?"

"Because we all know about *you* from the newspapers (not one word of which we could read ourselves), and we

are very anxious you should like us and our land, and tell the people in England we are not barbarians as they suppose. Please excuse my speaking to you, but I am the spokesman of many, who will be delighted to hear you are satisfied, and wish you a pleasant journey. If a stranger may be so bold—I thank you for coming."

"Finland certainly deserves to be better known," I replied.

"You think so? oh, I am glad;" and after a few minutes more conversation he said, "I hope you will enjoy *Punkaharju.*"

"How do you know I am going to *Punkaharju?*"

"I heard so, and that you are actually living in our Castle, and that you are going through the country to *Uleåborg.*"

I almost collapsed; but he was so nice and so smiling I dared not be angry at his somewhat inquisitive interest in my movements.

Another occasion it was an elderly general who calmly sat down and addressed me in German, in order to inquire what I was going to say, how I was going to say it, when it would appear, etc., etc.

These are only three instances of several, all showing the keen interest of the people that the land may be known and the Finlander a little better understood than he is by half the world to-day, who seem to imagine him to be a cross between a Laplander and a Esquimo—instead of what he is, a very cultured gentleman.

My sister eased the troubles of life for me by kindly doing the packing; but once, so she says, virtue seized me in a rigid grip—and I packed.

It was at *Olavin Linna*—at our Castle. We were leaving next day, and one Gladstone had to be filled with things we did not want for a short time, and the other to be packed with everything we required immediately.

I worked hard. Sorted everything; filled the extra Gladstone with clean linen, guide books, foods, papers, etc.,

strapped it, and then, feeling the incarnation of industry and pride, threw myself on that precious deck-chair to rest and read.

Presently my sister danced into the room. I told her of my virtue, received her congratulations and thanks, beamed with delight at my success, and answered her question as to the whereabouts of her bathing cap that "I had never seen it."

"Strange," she said, "I feel sure I left it on the window-sill to dry last night as usual, and it has gone, and I want a swim."

We both looked. We went down into the courtyard and scrambled among the lilac bushes immediately below the window. Finally, we decided it had been left on the tree at the bathing ground the night before. So off she went round that dangerous edge to find the cap. It was not there.

We called Grandpapa—Grandpapa called the *Vahktimestari*—the *Vahktimestari* called his under man; every one explained to every one else what was missing. At last the custodian remarked—

"Oh, now I understand what you mean; that sponge bag which lies beside the bathing dresses to dry; I didn't know what you meant by 'cap to bathe.'"

"Yes, yes, that is it," replied Grandpapa; "where is it?"

"I don't know."

"But it must be found. This lady dives and swims under water, and her long hair would get wet without it."

And so we looked, and looked, and all looked again.

"Let us go and buy another," remarked my sister in despair.

"Impossible," replied our student, who had now joined in the search, "you might get one in *Helsingfors*, but nowhere else."

We were in despair. Before evening the whole town had heard of the English ladies' strange loss, and the

bathing cap was as much commented upon as though it had been a dynamite bomb.

Confession they say is good for the soul. Then let me own my sin. The next day that bathing cap was found—*I had packed it up!*

Wherefore my sister on all inconvenient occasions says—

"Yes, she packed *once;* she put away everything we wanted, and left out everything we had no use for."

How cruelly frank one's relations are!

CHAPTER XII

PUNKAHARJU

EVERY one we met in Finland told us to make a point of seeing *Punkaharju*, just as strangers in London might be advised to visit the Tower, though in this case the great show was not a historical place, the work of men's hands, but a freak of Nature in one of her most charming moods.

Punkaharju being only a short distance from Nyslott, we proceeded thither in a small steamer supposed to start at noon.

By one of those lucky chances that sometimes occur in life, we happened to arrive at the steamer half an hour before the time she was advertised to sail, and were, to say the least of it, barely on board before a whistle sounded, when away we went. We were amazed at this proceeding, and, taking out our watches, discovered it still wanted *twenty* minutes to the time printed in the newspapers and on the advertisement at the bath-house.

It was only another instance showing that punctuality is absolutely considered of no value in Finland, for the steamer actually did start twenty minutes before its appointed hour, and no one then or after made the slightest complaint.

Imagine our Flying Scotchman speeding North even one minute before the advertised hour!

Having been told that *Punkaharju* was very full, we had therefore asked our charming student friend, who preceded us by a day, to kindly engage rooms to await our arrival. What was our surprise when we arrived at the little pier,

not only to meet him beaming with smiles as he hurried to say he had secured rooms, but to find a lady who had travelled with us from *Wiborg* and spoke English well, warmly welcoming us, the while she exclaimed—

"I found the Hotel was so full when I came that I told the landlord rooms would be required to-night, for I did not wish you to be disappointed."

She was a stranger, and her thoughtfulness was very kind. The plot thickened, however, a moment afterwards, when the Russian General, who had also travelled with us, arrived in his scarlet-lined uniform, and, saluting profoundly, begged to inform Madame he had taken the liberty of bespeaking rooms "as the Hotel was very full."

This was somewhat alarming, and it actually turned out that three suites of rooms had been engaged for us by three different people, each out of the goodness of his heart trying to avoid the dreadful possibility of our being sent away roofless. No wonder our host, thinking such a number of Englishwomen were arriving, had procured the only carriage in the neighbourhood and ordered it and a cart to come down to the pier and await this vast influx of folk. Although the Hotel was not a hundred yards actually from where we stood, everybody insisted on our getting into the little carriage, and my sister and I drove off in triumph by a somewhat circuitous route to the Hotel, only to find all our friends and acquaintances there before us, as they had come up the short way by the steps.

Even more strange was the fact that each one of our kind friends had told a certain Judge and his wife of our probable arrival, and promised to introduce the strange English ladies to them, while, funnily enough, we ourselves bore an introduction from the lady's brother, so, before any of our *companions de voyage* had time to introduce us, we had already made the acquaintance of the Judge and his wife through that gentleman's card. They were all exceedingly kind to us, and we thoroughly enjoyed our short stay among them.

Punkaharju is certainly a strange freak of Nature. Imagine a series of the most queerly-shaped islands all joined together by a natural roadway, for, strange to say, there is a ridge of land sometimes absolutely only the width of the road joining these islands in a connective chain. For about five miles these four or five islands are bound together in this very mysterious manner, so mysterious, in fact, that it seems impossible, as one walks along the roadway, to believe it is nature's freak and not man's hand that has made this extraordinary thoroughfare. It is most beautiful in the wider parts, where, there being more land, the traveller comes upon lovely dells, while the most marvellous mosses and ferns lie under the pine trees, and the flowers are beautiful.

No wonder *Runeberg* the poet loved to linger here—a veritable enchanted spot.

The morning after our arrival we had a delightful expedition in a boat to the end of the islands; but as a sudden storm got up, in the way that storms sometimes do in Finland, we experienced great difficulty in landing, and were ultimately carried from the boat to the beach in somewhat undignified fashion. However, we landed somehow, and most of us escaped without even wet feet. Just above us was a woodman's house, where our kind Judge had ordered coffee to be in readiness, and thither we started, a little cold and somewhat wet from the waves that had entered our bark and sprinkled us. On the way we paused to eat wild strawberries and to look at the ancient Russian bakeries buried in the earth. These primitive ovens of stone are of great size, for a whole regiment had been stationed here at the time of the war early in the century when Russia conquered Finland. And then we all sat on the balcony of the woodman's cottage and enjoyed our coffee, poured from a dear little copper pot, together with black bread and excellent butter, which were served with it.

On that balcony some six or eight languages were spoken by our Finnish friends, such wonderful linguists are they

as a nation. At the end of our meal the wind subsided and out came the most brilliant sunshine, changing the whole scene from storm to calm, like a fairy transformation at the pantomime.

We walked back to the Hotel, and the Finlanders proved to be right. As a beautiful bit of quaint nature, *Punkaharju* equals some of the finest passes in Scotland, while its formation is really most remarkable.

A ridiculous incident happened that day at dinner. Grandpapa, like a great many other persons in Finland, being a vegetarian, had gone to the fat and comfortable landlord that morning and explained that he wanted vegetables and fruit for his dinner. At four o'clock, the time for our midday meal, we all seated ourselves at table with excellent appetites, the Judge being on my left hand and his wife on my right.

We had all fetched our trifles from the *Smörgåsbord*, and there ensued a pause before the arrival of the soup. Solemnly a servant, bearing a large dish, came up to our table, and in front of our youthful Grandpapa deposited her burden. His title naturally gave him precedence of us all —an honour his years scarcely warranted. The dish was covered with a white serviette, and when he lifted the cloth, lo! some two dozen eggs were lying within its folds.

"How extraordinary," he said; "I told the landlord I was a vegetarian, and should like some suitable food; surely he does not think I am going to eat this tremendous supply of eggs."

We laughed.

"Where is our dinner?" we asked, a question which interested us much more than his too liberal supply.

"Oh! it will come in a moment," he replied cheerfully.

"But did you order it?" we ventured to inquire.

"No, I cannot say I did. There is a *table d'hôte*."

Unmercifully we chaffed him. Fancy his daring to order his own dinner, and never inquiring whether we were to have anything to eat or not; he, who had catered for our

wants in the mysteries of that castle home, so basely to desert us now!

He really looked quite distressed.

"I'm extremely sorry," he said, "but I thought, being in a hotel, you were sure to have everything you wanted. Of course there is a *table d'hôte* meal."

At this juncture the servant returned, bearing another large dish. *Our* dinner, of course, we hoped. Not a bit of it. A large white china basin, full of slices of cucumber, cut about a quarter of an inch thick, as cucumber is generally served in Finnish houses, again solemnly paused in front of Grandpapa. He looked a little uneasy as he inquired for *our dinner*.

"This is for the gentleman," she solemnly remarked; and so dish number two, containing at least three entire cucumbers for the vegetarian's dinner, was left before him. Another pause, and still our soup did not come; but the girl returned, this time bearing a glass dish on a long spiral stand filled with red stewed fruit, which, with all solemnity, she deposited in front of Grandpapa.

His countenance fell. Twenty-four eggs, three cucumbers, and about three quarts of stewed fruit, besides an enormous jug of milk and an entire loaf of bread, surrounded his plate, while we hungry mortals were waiting for even crumbs.

Fact was, the good housewife, unaccustomed to vegetarians, could not rightly gauge their appetites, and as the gentleman had ordered his own dinner she thought, and rightly, he was somebody very great, and accordingly gave him the best of what she had, and that in large quantities.

After dinner, which let us own was excellent, we had to leave our kind friends and drive back to *Nyslott*, for which purpose we had ordered two *kärra* (Swedish for cart), *karryts* (Finnish name), a proceeding which filled the Judge and his wife with horror.

"It is impossible," they said, "that you can drive such a distance in one of our ordinary Finnish *kärra*. You do

not know what you are undertaking. You will be shaken to death. Do wait and return to-morrow by the steamer."

We laughed at their fears, for had we not made up our minds to travel a couple of hundred miles through Finland at a not much later date by means of these very *kärra?* Certainly, however, when we reached the door our hearts failed us a little.

The most primitive of market carts in England could not approach the discomfort of this strange Finnish conveyance. There were two wheels, undoubtedly, placed across which a sort of rough-and-ready box formed the cart; on this a seat without a back was "reserved" for us. The body of the *kärra* was strewn with hay, and behind us and below us, and before us our luggage was stacked, a small boy of twelve sitting on our feet with his legs dangling out at the side while he drove the little vehicle.

Grandpapa and I got into one, our student friend and my sister into the other, and away we went amid the kindly farewells of all the occupants of the hostelry, who seemed to think we were little short of mad to undertake a long tiring journey in native carts, and to elect to sleep at our haunted castle on an island, instead of in a proper hotel!

We survived our drive — nay more, we enjoyed it thoroughly, although so shaken we feared to lose every tooth in our heads! It was a lovely evening, and we munched wild strawberries by the way, which we bought for twopence in a birch-bark basket from a shoeless little urchin on the highway. We had no spoon of course; but we had been long enough in Finland to know the correct way to eat wild strawberries was with a pin! The pin reminds us of pricks, and pricks somehow remind of soap, and soap reminds us of a little incident which may here be mentioned.

An old traveller never leaves home without a supply of soap; so, naturally, being *very* old travellers, we started with many cakes among our treasured possessions. But

in the interior of *Suomi*, quite suddenly, one of our travelling companions confided to us the fact that he had finished his soap and could not get another piece. My sister's heart melted, and she gave away our last bit but one, our soap having likewise taken unto itself wings. He was overjoyed, for English soap is a much-appreciated luxury in all foreign lands. Some days went by and the solitary piece we had preserved grew beautifully less and less; but we hoped to get some more at each little village we came to. We did not like to confide our want to our friend, lest he should feel that he had deprived us of a luxury—we might say a necessity.

Every morning my sister grumbled that our soap was getting smaller and smaller, which indeed it was, while the chance of replacing it grew more and more remote. Her grief was so real, her distress so great, that I could not help laughing at her discomfiture, and, whenever possible, informed her that I was about to wash my hands for the sake of enjoying the last lather of our rapidly dwindling treasure. At last she became desperate.

"I don't care what it costs," she said; "I don't care how long it takes, but I am going out to get a piece of soap, if I die for it."

So out she went, and verily she was gone for hours. I began to think she had either "died for it," or got into difficulties with the language, or been locked up in a Finnish prison!

I was sitting writing my notes, when suddenly the door was thrown open, and my sister, her face aflame with heat and excitement, appeared with a large bright orange parcel under her arm.

"I've got it, I've got it," she exclaimed.

"Got what—the measles or scarlet fever?"

"Soap," she replied with a tragic air, waving the bright orange bag over her head.

"You don't mean to say that enormous parcel contains soap?"

"I do," she replied, "I never intend to be without soap again, and so I bought all I could get. At least," with a merry twinkle and in an undertone, she added, "I brought away as little as I could, after explaining to the man for half an hour I did not want the enormous quantity he wished to press upon me."

Dear readers, it was not beautiful pink scented soap, it was not made in Paris or London; heaven only knows the place of its birth; it gave forth no delicious perfume; it was neither green, nor yellow, nor pink, to look upon. It was a hideous brown brick made in Lapland, I should think, and so hard it had probably been frozen at the North Pole itself.

But that was not all; when we began to wash, this wondrous soap which had cost so much trouble to procure —such hours in its pursuit—was evidently some preparation for scrubbing floors and rough household utensils, for there was a sandy grit about it which made us clean, certainly, but only at the expense of parting with our skin!

My poor sister! Her comedy ended in tragedy.

CHAPTER XIII

THE LIFE OF A TREE

WHAT different things are prized in different lands!

When walking round a beautiful park on an island in *Suomi*, the whole of which and a lovely mansion belonged to our host, he pointed with great pride to three oak trees, and said—

"Look at our oaks, are they not wonderful?"

We almost smiled. They were oaks, certainly, perhaps as big in circumference as a soup plate, which to an English mind was nothing; but the oak, called in Finnish *Pun Jumalan* or God's tree, is a great rarity in *Suomi*, and much prized, whereas the splendid silver birches and glorious pines, which call forth such praise and admiration from strangers, count for nothing, in spite of the magnificent luxuriance of their growth.

The pine is one of the most majestic of all trees. It is so superbly stately—so unbending to the breeze. It raises its royal head aloft—soaring heavenwards, heedless of all around; while the silvery floating clouds gently kiss its lofty boughs, as they fleet rapidly hither and thither in their endless chase round this world. Deep and dark are the leaves, strong and unresisting; but even they have their tender points, and the young shoots are deliciously green and sweet scented. Look at its solid stem—so straight that every maiden passing by sighs as she attempts to imitate its superb carriage, and those very stems are coloured by a wondrous pinky hue ofttimes; so pink,

BURNING THE FORESTS
(After Eero Järnefelt)

in fact, we pause to wonder if it be painted by Nature's brush, or is merely a whim of sunset playing upon the sturdy bark.

Look beneath the pine; its dark and solid grandeur protects and fosters the tenderest of green carpets. See the moss of palest green, its long fronds appearing like very ferns, or note those real ferns and coarser bracken fighting the brambles for supremacy or trying to flout that little wild rose daring to assert its individuality.

Pines and silver birches flourish on all sides.

Everything or anything can apparently be made of birch bark in Finland—shoes, baskets, huge or small, salt bottles, flower vases—even an entire suit of clothing is hanging up in *Helsingfors* Museum, manufactured from the bark of the silver birch!

The bark thus used, however, is often cut from the growing tree, but this requires to be very carefully done so as not to destroy the sap. As one drives through the forests, one notices that many of the trees have dark-brown rings a foot or more wide round their trunks, showing where the bark has been stripped away. The ribband for plaiting is made, as a rule, about an inch wide, although very much narrower necessarily for fine work, and then it is plaited in and out, each article being made double, so that the shiny silvery surface may show on either side. Even baby children manipulate the birch bark, and one may pass a cluster of such small fry by the roadside, shoeless and stockingless, all busily plaiting baskets, etc., with their nimble little fingers. We often marvelled at their dexterity.

What were those packets of brown paper securely fixed to the top of long poles all over that field, we wondered?

"Why, sheets of birch bark," answered our friend, "put out to dry in the sun for the peasants to plait baskets and boxes, shoes and satchels, such as you have just seen; they peeled those trees before cutting them down."

On another of our drives we noticed bunches of dried leaves tied at the top of some of the wooden poles which support the strangely tumbledown-looking wooden fences which are found everywhere in Finland, and serve not only as boundaries to fields but also to keep up the snow.

"What are those dead leaves?" we asked the lad who drove our *kärra*.

"They are there to dry in the sun, for the sheep to eat in the winter," was his reply, with which we ought to have rested satisfied; but thinking that was not quite correct, as they were in patches round some fields and not in others, we asked the boy of the second springless vehicle the same question.

"Those," he said, "are put up to dry in the sun round the rye fields, and in the autumn, when the first frost comes and might destroy the whole crop in a single night, they are lighted, and the warmth and the wind from them protect the crops till they can be hastily gathered the next day."

This sounded much more probable, and subsequently proved perfectly correct. These sudden autumn frosts are the farmer's terror, for his crops being out one day too long may mean ruin, and that he will have to mix birch bark or Iceland moss with his winter's bread to eke it out, poor soul!

The export of timber from Finland is really its chief trade.

	Export of Wood, Cubic Metres (about 36 Cubic Feet).	Wood Pulp. Kilograms.	Paper, chiefly made from Wood Pulp. Kilograms.
1874	843,031	3,116,139	1,317,021
1884	1,229,008	9,326,288	8,464,841
1894	1,722,322	33,802,916	17,675,856
1895	2,704,126	35,548,000	...
1896	2,136,888	39,096,000	...

From this table it will be seen that a very large quantity of pulp is exported, likewise a great deal of paper, and chiefly to our own country.

England exports to Finland somewhat, but very little, of her own produce, unfortunately; tea, coffee, sugar, and such foreign wares being transhipped from England and Germany—principally from the latter to Finland. The foreign inland trade of *Suomi* is chiefly in the hands of the Germans. "Made in Germany" is as often found on articles of commerce, as it is in England. Well done, Germany!

We gained some idea of the magnitude of the Finnish wood trade when passing *Kotka*, a town in the Gulf of Finland, lying between *Helsingfors* and *Wibórg*.

Immense stacks of sawn wood were piled up at *Kotka*, and in the bay lay at least a dozen large ships and steamers, with barges lying on either side filling them with freight as quickly as possible for export to other lands.

The trees of Finland *are* Finland. They are the gold mines of the country, the props of the people, the products of the earth; the very money bags that feed most of its two million and a half of inhabitants. The life of a Finnish tree is worth retailing from the day of its birth until it forms the floor or walls of a prince's palace or a peasant's hut. To say that Finland is one huge forest is not true, for the lakes—of which there are five or six thousand—play an important part, and cover about one-sixth of the country, but these very lakes, rivers, and waterways all take their share in the wood trade. Some of the lakes are really inland seas, and very rough seas too. Tradition says they are bottomless—anyway, many of them are of enormous depth. Tradition might well say the forests are boundless, for what is not water in Finland is one vast and wonderful expanse of wood.

Now let us look at the life of a tree. Like Topsy "it growed;" it was not planted by man. Those vast pine forests, extending for miles and miles, actual mines of wealth, are a mere veneer to granite rocks. That is the wonderful

part of it all, granite is the basis, granite distinctly showing the progress of glaciers of a former period.

Such is the foundation, and above that a foot or two of soil, sometimes less, for the rocks themselves often appear through the slight covering; but yet out of this scant earth and stone the trees are multiplied.

Standing on the top of the tower of the old castle—alas! so hideously restored—at *Wiborg*, one can see for miles and miles nothing but lakes and trees, and as we lingered and wondered at the flatness of the land our attention was arrested by patches of smoke.

"Forest fires, one of the curses of the land," we learned. "In hot weather there are often awful fires; look, there are five to be seen from this tower at one moment, all doing much damage and causing great anxiety, because the resin in the pines makes them burn furiously."

"How do they put them out?" we asked.

"Every one is summoned from far and near; indeed, the people come of themselves when they see smoke, and all hands set to work felling trees towards the fire in order to make a space round the flaming woods, or beating with long poles the dry burning mass which spreads the fire. It is no light labour; sometimes miles of trenching have to be dug as the only means whereby a fire can be extinguished; all are willing to help, for, directly or indirectly, all are connected with the wood trade."

Here and there where we travelled, the forests were on fire—fires luckily not caused by those chance conflagrations, which do so much harm in Finland, but duly organised to clear a certain district. Matters are arranged in this wise: when a man wants to plough more land, he selects a nice stretch of wood, saws down all the big trees, which he sledges away, the next set (in point of size) he also hews down, but leaves where they fall, with all their boughs and leaves on, till the sun dries them. Then he makes a fire in their midst, the dried leaves soon catching, and in a few hours the whole acreage is bare except for the tree trunks,

which are only charred and serve later for firewood. All the farm hands, often augmented by neighbours, assist at these fires, for although a man may wish to clear two or three acres, if the flames were not watched, they would soon lay twenty or thirty bare, and perhaps destroy an entire forest. The ashes lie on the ground and become manure, so that when, during the following summer, he begins to plough, the sandy soil is fairly well-fed, and ultimately mildly prolific. He is very ingenious this peasant, and takes the greatest care not to let the flames spread beyond his appointed boundary, beating them with huge sticks, as required, and keeping the flames well in hand. The disastrous forest fires, caused by accidental circumstances, spoil the finest timber, and can only be stayed in their wild career, as we remarked elsewhere, by digging trenches, over which the roaring flames cannot pass. Such fires are one of the curses of Finland, and do almost as much harm as a flight of locusts in Morocco.

"How old are those trees we see, twenty or thirty years?"

Our friend the *Kommerserådet* smiled.

"Far, far more," he replied; "speaking roughly, every tree eight inches in diameter twenty feet from the ground is eighty years old, nine inches ninety years, ten inches a hundred years old, and so on."

We were amazed to think that these vast forests should be so old, for if it took so long for a tree to grow, and so many millions were felled every year, it seemed to us that the land would soon be barren.

"Not at all," our friend replied, "a forest is never cleared. Only trees which have reached a proper girth are felled. In every forest but a certain number of trees are cut each year, so that fresh ones are in a continuous stream taking their places."

Rich merchants possess their own forests, their own saw-mills, their own store houses, and even their own ships; but the bulk of exporters pay for cut timber. In hiring a forest

the tenant takes it on lease for so many years with the right to fell all trees so soon as they reach certain dimensions. The doomed trees are marked, and now we must follow their after course.

In the autumn and winter they are felled and left for the first fall of snow, when they are dragged (*hauke*), sometimes two or three logs one behind the other fixed together with iron chains, to the nearest open road for further conveyance by sledge when the snow permits.

No single horse could move such a weight in summer, but by the aid of sledges and snow all is changed, and away gallop the little steeds down the mountain side, pushed forward at times by the weight behind. By this means the trees are conveyed to the nearest waterway.

Then the logs are stamped with the owner's registered mark and rolled upon the ice of lake or river, to await the natural transport of spring. Once the ice thaws the forests begin to move, for as "Birnam Wood marched to Dunsinane," the Finnish forests float to other lands.

Imagine the helter skelter of those thousands of trees over the roaring, rushing waterfalls, or along the rapidly flowing cataracts and flooded rivers. To prevent these wooden horses getting caught-up on the banks along their watery course, men with long poles "personally conduct" huge batches to the coast, or, where they are likely to get fixed, a sort of wooden fencing is built in the river to direct their course. On, on they voyage, those soldiers of the forest, for hundreds of miles to the coast, till, finally arriving at such an enormous wood export town as *Kotka*, they meet their doom.

Wherever the chain of waterways is composed of large lakes, the logs are conveyed to the coast by means of enormous rafts. It is really most ingenious; head and tail into a ring half-a-mile or more in circumference float the pine trees, coupled together by iron clamps. Inside these the newly-cut logs are thrust end on end, until they make a perfectly solid floor floating on the surface of the water.

Now, as a raft of this kind contains many thousand logs, which means a considerable amount of money value, it is conveyed to the coast with the greatest care. At one end a small house is built on the raft itself, on which live the two or three men who have to escort this floating island across the lakes, attend to the logs that get out of place, or secure the fastenings of the outside wood which binds the whole together.

Naturally it takes some weeks for such a vast island to reach the coast, and as it is sometimes necessary for various reasons to stop on the journey, a horse goes on the raft so as to let down or pull up the anchor when necessary. It is truly wonderful to think that on a floating mass of tree trunks, merely bound together by a primitive barrier or outside ring, men should live for weeks, and a horse should have its stabling! Yet such is the case, and many times during our ten weeks' sojourn in Finland we passed these floating islands wending their way to the coast.

Of course, it is understood rafts can only travel over the vast lakes, and that on rivers the wood must go separately in the manner before described. But in such a river as the *Uleå*, where the salmon fishing is of as great importance—if not greater—than wood, the latter are only allowed to pass down until the day when salmon fishing commences. On the completion of the floating, the stock logs at *Kotka* often amount to a million pieces. That alone gives some idea of this wonderful industry. About a mile above *Kotka* the logs are received by the floating inspector and his trained sorters, who separate and distribute, according to the marks thereon, the logs to their respective owners.

Large floating houses await their arrival, and as the back part of these sheds are divided by half a dozen or so openings leading into the water pens, the men at work quickly turn the timber over, see the owners' names, and by means of a pole steer it into the space belonging to that owner, so that in time each water pen becomes filled with the trees belonging to its proprietor.

All this time the steam sawmills are waiting for their prey, and, like the pigs at Chicago who come out smoked and cooked hams, according to tradition, the trees that go in have half a dozen saws run into them at once, and out come boards and planks of various thicknesses and widths. The middle bit—the plum of the cake—is the worst in this instance, as it contains the heart, which is bad wood for working as it splits and twists on drying; the rest is converted into deals, battens, and boards. The outside slab pieces are made into staves for barrels, while the general odds and ends that remain behind are used as fuel for engines, steamboats, or private house consumption in Finland, where coal being practically unknown, wood takes its place.

The sawn wood is stacked up for miles and miles along the waterside to season ready for export, and, as a rule, the Finnish owners sell their timber with the clause that it should be ready to be shipped at "first open water," when away go the pines, cargo after cargo, the best being sent to England, and other qualities to France, Germany, etc. Thus from Finland comes much of the wood that makes our floors, our window frames, our railings, and our doors, and lights our daily fires—it enters the peasant hut, and it finds a place in the royal palace.

Another big trade is birch—a class of wood cut up into reels and bobbins for England; and yet another is aspen, which wood is supplied to Sweden in large quantities to make matches. Not only are matches pure and simple made enormously in Sweden; but when leaving Gottenburg on our homeward journey we saw hundreds of large cases being put on board our steamer. Although very big, one man carried a case with ease, much to our surprise, for anything so large in the way of cargo was generally hoisted on board with a crane. What a revelation! These cases contained match boxes, which are sent by thousands every week to England.

There is an enormous export of wood spirit made from

sawdust; yet even then, until lately, it was difficult to get rid of the superfluous sawdust, a great deal of which was burned away in large furnaces.

Thus Finnish timber passes from the country, but the wood trade does not end with poles and beams, and boards and logs, for sawdust is now beginning to play a very important rôle in the trade of Finland, and before long silk factories may be started, as our French friends have found that very beautiful fabrics can be made from wood, which takes dye almost better than silk woven by a painstaking little worm, only costs a fraction of the money, and sells almost equally well.

So that wood for building purposes, for matches or fuel, pulp for paper, sawdust for spirit and perhaps for silk, are the outcome of the life of a Finnish tree.

CHAPTER XIV

THROUGH SAVOLAX IN CARTS

WE were in despair!

By the kindness of the Governor of the district everything had been arranged for a drive of a couple hundred miles through some of the prettiest parts of the country from *Kuopio* to *Iisalmi*. We were to have a carriage with a hood (a rare honour) and two horses, to dawdle as we liked by the way, and just order our vehicle when and as we wanted it, so that we might really peep into the homes of the people, as well as avail ourselves of the Baron's many kind introductions. But late on the afternoon before that named for leaving, our cicerone found it was imperative for him to remain a couple of days longer in *Kuopio* to receive his sisters who were to join our party, therefore we found ourselves stranded so far as his escort was concerned.

"How were we two Englishwomen to travel alone through the very centre of Finland, where no one spoke a word except his own language?" asked the Governor.

"Perfectly," we replied; "we can travel anywhere, so far as that goes, by signs and with a map; but, of course, we shall *learn* nothing more than what we can see with our eyes, for we shall not know how to ask for information, and therefore half the pleasure and interest of the journey will be lost."

"Were I not compelled to go on an official journey to-morrow," replied the fine, tall, and charming Governor,

"I should come myself—as it is, will you accept the escort of my son?"

"Willingly, thankfully," we replied.

Baron George spoke both French and German, and was a good Finnish scholar besides. *He* was to have gone on a bicycle tour that very afternoon, but kindly altered all his plans to pass a couple of days as our guide, cicerone, and friend, and a third on his return journey alone.

Accordingly we started at nine A.M. on the next morning, and drove over sixty miles through Finland during the two following days, by a route soon to be followed with railway engines, for it has already been surveyed for that purpose, and little posts here and there denoted the projected route.

Seen off by the Governor's family, who had shown us the greatest hospitality and kindness during our stay in *Kuopio*, we were peeped at by half the town as we started, for English people, and a hooded vehicle driving through *Savolax* was no mean event, especially when these same people had been entertained by the Governor of the district.

After a spin of five kilometres, or about two and a half English miles, we reached the *lossi*, and our adventures began. A mile and a half of water had to be crossed; naturally there was no bridge, nor was there any friendly ice on those hot days, therefore a *lossi* or boat, rather like a river barge, conveys passengers—a *rara avis*—horses, and carriage right over that wide expanse of lake. Our hearts sank when we saw the boat. It was simply a shell, without seats or even a platform for the carriage. The old boat was big, but our equipage appeared even bigger, and we looked on in dismay, wondering how on earth we were ever to get across unless we took half a dozen journeys to and fro.

Afterwards our dismay turned to admiration at the skill with which the whole thing was accomplished. First, our pair of mustard-coloured ponies, with long tails, big bodies and small legs—who, by the bye, went splendidly for two

whole days—were unharnessed, their primitive trappings, much mended with string and rope, being thrown into our carriage; then two planks of wood were laid from the empty boat to the top step of the landing-stage on which we stood, men, seizing each of the four wheels, slowly trundled the heavy carriage along those planks to the barge's side. So far so good; but the boat was in the water, and the carriage some feet higher up on the pier; more planks being speedily arranged, however, it was most cleverly slipped down the pier's side on them, and after others had been placed the right distance apart for the wheels to stand on, into the boat itself. So there our victoria—if we may call our vehicle by so grand a name—stood right across the boat, its pole and bar being reflected in the lake, over which they hung on the one side, the luggage and hood of the vehicle projecting over the water on the other.

As though accustomed to such strange feats, those "mustard pots" walked down the steps of the primitive pier, lifted their feet over the boat's side most dexterously—as a lady in fine shoes might daintily cross some muddy road—and stood head and tail next the carriage.

A Finnish pony is a marvel. He has no chest, is so narrow, one almost wonders, when standing before his head, where his body can really be. He has fine legs with good hoofs and fetlocks; he looks ill-groomed and ill-cared for, his tail is long and bushy, and his mane unkempt. Yet he goes up hill or down dale at a good pace (averaging six miles an hour), and he will do thirty miles easily in a day and not turn a hair. They are wonderful little animals these mustard-coloured steeds of Finland, and as agile and sure-footed as a cat, although not so famous as the world-renowned fast trotters of *Suomi*.

Then we three got in and sat down, in what little space remained, finding room on planks placed between the wheels. We certainly made a boat full, and a very queer cargo we were.

Two women "ferrymen" found room to row in front,

the coachman attended to his horses, one of which was inclined to be restive, while a man, whose flaxen hair was so light it looked positively white, stood rowing behind us; and thus in three-quarters of an hour we reached the other side, in as wonderful a transport as the trains we had seen put on steamers in Denmark, but much more exciting and primitive.

Gaily and cheerfully, meantime, we discussed the prospects of our visit to Lapland; for the Northern part of Finland is the country of reindeer and Laps, and thither we had made up our minds to go as a fitting finish to our summer jaunt. From *Uleåborg* we were to take the steamer to *Torneo*, and there to commence a drive which promised to be most interesting, if a little more cold and perhaps not quite so pretty as our long journey through *Savolax* in *kärra* or carts.

We drove on through lovely scenery till twelve o'clock, when we arrived at a post-house for luncheon.

What a scene met our eyes! An enormous kitchen, a wooden-floored, ceilinged and walled room about thirty feet square, boasting five windows—large and airy, I was about to say, but it just missed being airy because no fresh breeze was ever allowed to enter except by the door. At one end was the usual enormous fireplace, with its large chimney and small cooking stove, into which wood had continually to be piled, coal being as unknown to the inland Finn as the sea-serpent itself. At the other end of the room, opposite the fireplace, was a large wooden table with benches arranged along two sides, at which the labourers were feeding, for the one o'clock bell hanging above the roof had just been rung by the farmer, and they had all come in for their midday meal. It was really a wonderful scene; five men wearing coloured shirts, and four women, with white handkerchiefs over their heads, were sitting round the table, and between each couple was a small wooden, long-handled pail, from which the pair, each duly provided with a wooden spoon, were helping themselves. Finnish peasants

—and until lately even Finnish town servants—all feed from one pot and drink from one bowl in truly Eastern fashion. The small wooden receptacle, which really served as a basin, contained *piimeä* or skimmed milk that had gone sour, a composition somewhat allied to *skyr*, on which peasants live in Iceland, only that *skyr* is sheep's milk often months old, and *piimeä* is cow's milk fairly fresh. This *piimeä* with sour black bread and salted but uncooked small fish (*suolo-kala*) is the peasant's fare, yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow, almost always the same! These people never taste meat, unless it be for a treat salted, while fresh vegetables are unknown, cabbage even being a luxury. Each labourer pulled his *punkko* (knife) from its sheath at his waist—alas, too frequently pulled in anger—and cutting hunks of brown bread, dragged a fish like a sardine (only it was dry and salt) from another wooden tub, and cutting off bits ate them together, after the fashion of a sandwich, helping himself every now and then with a wooden spoon to a lump of the sour milk, or, when his companion was not doing the same, raising the pail—the wooden walls of which were half an inch thick—to his lips and drinking the more watery part of his harmless liquor.

Haili also haunted us in every peasant home. It is another species of small fish which the peasants eat raw, a little salt being its only preparation. They seem to buy or catch *haili* by the ton, and then keep them for months in the cellar. We were always seeing them eat these *haili*, which looked something like sprats, and tasted ineffably nasty. On high days and holidays they partake of them accompanied with baked potatoes; but potatoes are rare, and therefore the fish on black bread alone constitutes the usual meal. Sometimes better-class folk eat *haili*, but then they have them grilled on coal; these are rich people, for coal is as great a luxury to them even as potatoes to the poor.

They seemed very happy, those men and women who had been up and hard at work in the fields since three or

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four in the morning, and would not have finished their day's labour till between eight and nine P.M., for the summer is short, and while it lasts the peasant gets little or no sleep, his entire livelihood depending upon almost incessant work during the light warm days. It was the 10th of July; the hay was cut everywhere, and thrown up on the wooden palings erected for that purpose, or the old pine trees stuck here and there, to dry before being piled up on little sledges that were to convey it to the nearest wooden shanty, to be stacked for winter use.

Sledges convey the hay crop in the summer along the roadways, where wheels would be dragged from their axles by the stones and rocks.

A year or two ago, when hay was very scarce in England, quantities were sent over from Finland, and excellent it was, full of clover and sweet flowers, for although only grown in patches—sometimes even scraps by the roadside—the quality of the crop repays the enormous patience and labour necessary to produce it.

Finland's wild flowers are renowned, and the hay is full of sweet-scented blossoms.

The peasant farmer at whose *majatalo* we halted was a rich man, and had let out some of his farms to people in a smaller way, who in return had to give him fourteen days' labour in the year whenever he demanded them, also many bags of rye—in regular old feudal style—for money did not pass between them. Just as well, perhaps, considering that Finnish money a couple of hundred years ago weighed several pounds—indeed its unwieldiness may have been the origin of this exchange of labour for land. We actually saw an old coin over two feet long and one foot wide in the *Sordavala* Museum. It is made of copper about one-eighth of an inch thick, with uneven edges as though it had been rolled out like a piece of pastry, and bears the name Kristina 1624-1654, with one coin stamped in the middle about the size of a florin, and one at each of the corners. How delightfully easy travelling must have been

in those days with a hundred such useful little coins in one's possession!

There were many more of half that size, the earliest being Kaarlo XI.

All through the year the peasant farmer recently referred to employed six hands, and he told us that the men earned 120 marks a year (£4), and a woman 50 or 60 (£2), with clothes, board, and lodging. It did not seem to be very grand pay; but then the labourers had no expenses, and were, judging from their appearance, well cared for.

Later, when wandering round the homestead, we found a shed full of sledges, filled with hay and covered by coarse woven sheets, made by the family (for every decent house spins and weaves for itself), and in these the hired labourers slept. It was all very primitive, but wondrously clean.

In truly Finnish fashion the family was varied. First we saw an aged mother, a delightful old soul, whose husband was dead and whose eldest son therefore worked the farm. He had a wife and five children, the latter being all much of an age. He also had a sister with her invalid husband, and his younger brother and one child—so that there were several relationships under the same roof, let us hope proving "Union is Strength," although we hardly think the English temperament would care for such family gatherings.

In the kitchen-dining-room was a baby in a cradle, and another sort of crib was hanging from the ceiling by cords, the infant lying in a kind of linen pocket on a pillow.

We were much amazed to see a patent process by which the infant in the cradle was being fed. It was a wooden crib, in shape like an old German one, and at one side of it projected an arm of wood curved round in such a way that it came up from the side of the cradle and bent almost over the child's face. Great was our amazement to find that a cow horn was fixed into this wooden arm, so that the thin part of the horn reached the baby's mouth, while the thick part stood up three or four inches above the hole in the

wood in which it was resting. Was it a toy, we marvelled, because, if so, it seemed remarkably dangerous to have anything so hard in such near proximity to a baby's face, but great was our surprise on closer examination to find it a feeding-bottle!

The horn was hollow, and on the thin end was a primitive teat of linen, through which the baby was drawing the milk poured in at the top of this novel feeding-bottle.

In a corner of the same room was a wonderful frame on rollers to teach a child to walk. There was a small round hole through which the infant was pulled, so that the polished ring supported it under the armpits, from that rim four wooden pillars slanted outwards, being bound together at the bottom by other pieces of wood securely fixed to four rolling castors. In this the child could move; and the little brat rolled about from side to side of the uneven flooring, securely held up in its wooden cage. A small child of five was peeling potatoes, specially dug up in our honour, beside a wooden bucket, while a cat played with a kitten, and a servant girl—for well-to-do farmers have servants—made black bread in a huge tub, the dough being so heavy and solid that she could not turn it over at all, and only managed to knead it by doubling her fists and regularly plunging them to the bottom with all her strength. Her sunburnt arms disappeared far above her elbow, and judging by the way the meal stuck to her she found bread-making very hard work. Finlanders only bake every few weeks, so the bread is often made with a hole and hung up in rows from the ceiling, or, if not, is placed on the kitchen rafters till wanted. This bread is invariably sour—the natives like it so—and to get it rightly flavoured they always leave a little in the tub, that it may taste the next batch, as sour cream turns the new cream for butter. She was not a bad-looking girl; Dame Nature had been kinder to her than to most of her sex in Finland.

Somehow that scene did not look real—it had a kind of theatrical effect. The surroundings were too like a museum;

the entry of the labourers after the chiming of the bell closely resembled a stage effect—the old grandmother, the children, the bright cotton shirts and skirts, the wondrous fireplace, the spinning-wheel and weaving-frame—yes, it all seemed too picturesque, too full of colour, and too well grouped to be an event in our commonplace every-day life. Yet this was merely a peep at a Finnish home, in which just such a scene is enacted every day—a home but little off the beaten tracks, and only a short distance from steamboats and trains. The way to understand anything of a land or its people is to leave the tourist route and peep into its homes for oneself.

In Finland there are always post-stations about every eight or twelve miles, according to requirements or capabilities of the peasantry, where horses and beds can be procured. They are called *majatalo* in Finnish, or *gastgifveri* in Swedish. Well-to-do farmers are chosen for the post, because they can afford better accommodation to strangers, and generally there are one or two who apply for the honour, more than for the 100 (or 200 marks in some instances) subsidy they get for keeping up the *majatalo*.

The Governor of the Province then has to choose the most suitable applicant, settles the charge for food and beds, according to the class of accommodation, and writes them out officially (in three languages) on cards, to be hung up in the rooms, provides the farmer with a *Päiväkirja*, or Daybook, in which it says: "Two horses must always be ready, and two carts, or if an extra turnout be required, double fare may be charged." Fourteen penni the kilometre (or about twopence halfpenny a mile) is the ordinary charge for a horse and trap, a room and a bed are sixty penni, an ordinary meal sixty, coffee ten, etc., so that the prices are not ruinous. Indeed, travelling in the interior of Finland is altogether moderate, when done as the Finns do it by posting, but a private carriage is an enormous expense, and, on the whole, it is just as dear to travel in *Suomi* as in Normandy, Brittany, or the Tyrol.

Of course it is not so expensive as London, Paris, or Vienna. How could it be, where there are none of the luxuries of these vast cities? Every one has to sign the *Päiväkirja*, stating from whence he came, whither he goes, and what horses he had. Complaints are also entered, and the book has to go periodically to the Governor for inspection. So the whole posting arrangement is well looked after.

We fared very well at our first *majatalo*, but of course we had to wait over an hour before we got anything to eat. One always must in Finland, and, although a trial to the temper at first, it is a good lesson in restraint, and by degrees we grew accustomed to it. One can get accustomed to anything—man is as adaptable as the trees.

We had black bread — nothing else can be got in peasant homes—and any one who cannot accept its sourness, and one might add hardness, must provide himself with white bread from the towns. We got excellent butter of course—the smallest home has good butter and milk in Finland, where the little native cows can be bought for 60 or 100 marks. They live on what they can find in the summer, and dried birch leaves, moss, or an occasional "delikatess" of hay in the winter. We had also deliciously cold fresh milk, that and coffee being the only drinks procurable, as a rule, and a small fish with a pink skin like a mullet, fresh out of the water, was served nicely fried in butter, the farmer having sent a man to catch it on our arrival.

There was cold bacon, too poisonous in appearance to touch, and hot eggs, but no egg-cups, of course. We bumped the round heavy end of the eggs, and stood them up on our plates, native fashion, and felt we had learnt a trick that might be useful when egg-cups fell short in England! In fact, before we left our peasant homes, we had begun to look upon an egg-cup as a totally unnecessary luxury, and to find ourselves so capable of managing without one, that the egg no longer ran out at the wrong end, as it

did at first in our inexperienced hands, but behaved as every well-behaved egg ought to do—that is to say, sit up on its end and appear as if it liked it.

One terrible-looking dish adorned our table on this and many occasions. It was pike — caught, cleaned, opened, salted, and kept till wanted; a piece, being laid flat on a plate to be served, is cut in thin slices and spread on bread and butter by those who care to eat the luxury. At the bone it was red, and gradually tapered away to a white gelatinous-looking stuff. We never dare venture upon this choice raw dish. It had a particularly distasteful appearance. As there was no *filbunke*, made of sour unskimmed milk, which we had learnt to enjoy, we had to content ourselves with *piimeä*, the skimmed milk curdled, but as we were visitors, and not peasants, tumblers of fresh cream had been poured over it, and with sugar it tasted really excellent. It was a primitive dinner, but with fresh fish and eggs, milk and cream, no one need starve, and we only paid fivepence each for our midday meal, such a sum being fixed on the tariff. Our dear comfortable old hostess was fascinated by our presence, and sat smiling and blinking beside us all the time, her hands, folded over her portly form below the short straight cotton jacket she wore, were raised occasionally to retie her black silk head-covering. Again and again she murmured—"*Englantililajet*" (Englishwoman), and nodded approval.

Poor Baron George had to answer all her questions about England, our age, size, weight, height, the price of our clothing, why our hair was so dark—an endless subject of inquiry among the peasantry—and to ply her with questions from us in return.

It was with real regret we left these folk, they were so honest and simple, so far removed from civilisation and its corrupting influences on their thoughts, that they and their life seemed to take us back a couple of centuries at least.

The family came out and shook hands with us on leaving; but not before they had one and all sat down in our

grand carriage, just to see what it was like. Individually, we thought it a ramshackle old chaise, but further acquaintance with the springless native carts made us look back at that victoria as if it were the Lord Mayor's Coach!

It is no uncommon thing for the roofs of the houses in *Savolax* to be thatched with wood, that is to say, shavings, quite thin, and an inch or so wide, are put on in the same over-lapping style as thatch is at home. At *Wiborg* we were shown, among the curiosities of the town, a red-tiled roof, which Finlanders thought as wonderful as we thought their wooden thatch.

Such is life. What we eat, others despise; what we think beautiful, others find hideous; what we call virtue, other lands consider vice; what to us is novel and interesting is to others mere commonplace; the more we travel, and the more we read, the less we find we know, except that there may be good and use in all things, and that other men and women, with whom we have not one idea in common, are quite as clever or good as ourselves—more so, perhaps!

"Why, what is that? Three stone chimneys without any house," we exclaimed, seeing three brick erections standing bleak and alone in the midst of a dreary waste.

"Ah," replied Baron George, "that is one of the sad sides of Finnish life. Those three stone chimneys are the only remains of what was once a three-roomed house. All the dwellings, as you know, are entirely built of wood, except for the brick chimneys. These three great gaunt towers mean fire, and perhaps starvation. One of those little houses will burn to the ground in an hour, on a dry windy night, and all the toil of years, all the wealth of its proprietor, the home of his family, be reduced to the few ashes you see on the ground, while the clock marks one short hour."

It seemed horrible. Those three chimneys looked so gaunt and sad. Where were the folk who had lived beside them, cooked beneath them, and spent their lives of grief or joy?

Outside every house in Finland stands a large wooden ladder, tall enough to reach to the top of the roof, for fire is very common, and generally ends in everything being demolished by the flames. Buckets of water, passed on by hand, can do little to avert disaster, when the old wooden home is dry as tinder and often rotten to the core.

Again our attention was arrested as we jogged along by the earth mounds; those queer green mounds that look like graves in a country churchyard, which are so common in Iceland, where they grow so close together, there is often hardly room for a pony's feet to pass between, but on the origin of which scientists disagree. The grass-grown sand—sand as beautiful and silvery as the sand of Iona, but here was no sea, although it had left its deposits in ages long gone by—was beautifully fresh and green.

Iceland moss, too, grows in profusion—a very useful commodity for the peasants, who plug out the draughts in their houses with it, or make it into a kind of medicinal drink, as the Buckinghamshire peasant makes her nettle tea from the wondrous stinging nettles that grow five feet high in some of the lovely lanes of wooded Bucks.

Iceland moss, indeed, has taken the place of bread in times of famine, for that or the bark of the pine tree has been ground down many times into flour and mixed with a little rye for the half-starved peasants' only sustenance.

With all their sufferings and their hardships, can we be surprised that they take life seriously?

That evening at ten o'clock—but it might have been seven judging by the brilliancy of the sunset—we rowed on the lake, accompanied by a grandson of Finland's greatest poet, *Runeberg*.

It really was a wonderful night; we English have no idea of the gorgeousness of July sunsets in Finland; we little dream of the heat of the day, or the length and beauty of the evenings. It is in these wondrous sunny glows, which spread themselves like a mantle, that the hundreds of miles of lakes and thousands and thousands of islands look their

best. And there are many such evenings. Evenings when one feels at peace with all the world, and one's thoughts soar higher than the busy turmoil of the crowded city.

It is these wonderful nights that impress the stranger most of all in Finland. There is something to make even the most prosaic feel poetical. There is a dull dreariness, a sombre sadness in the scene, and at the same time a rich warmth of colouring, a strength of Nature that makes even the least artistic feel the wonders of the picture spread out before them, and, withal, a peacefulness, for these vast tracts of uninhabited land mean repose. Those numerous pine forests, denoting quiet, and the wide, wide canopy of Heaven, unbroken by mountain or hill, give one an idea of vast extent and wild expanse.

Finland is reposeful; and has a charm about it which is particularly its own.

It was on such an evening as this that we rowed over the wide waters of *Maaninker*, as still as a mirror, to the little white church, with its tower soaring out of the pines, on the other side. We had been joined by several new friends, all anxious to show us their church; but, individually, our happiness was a little spoilt by the fact that the boat was leaking badly, and we could positively see the water rising in her bottom.

We had been in many curious boats before, and had got accustomed to folding our petticoats neatly up on our laps, but this boat filled more rapidly than usual, and we did not run for the bank till six or eight inches of water covered her bottom. It rose apace, and before we reached the shore our feet and our skirts were up on our seats for safety, and, verily, we were well-nigh swamped.

Out we scrambled; the men immediately beached the frail bark, and as they did so the water all ran away. "What an extraordinary thing," we thought, and when they pulled her right on to shore we saw the last drops disappearing from the boat.

"Why, the plug is out," one of them exclaimed, and,

sure enough, the plug was out! In the bottom of every Finnish boat they have a round hole, and this round hole contains a cork or plug, so that when the craft fills with water, as she invariably does from leaking or spray or other causes, they merely pull her up on to the shore, take out the plug, and let the water run away. But in this particular case the plug had never been put in, or had somehow got lost, and we actually rowed across a lake with the water rising at the rate of about half an inch a minute.

We scrambled up over the slippery pine needles to the crest of the little eminence on which the church stood, and found ourselves in the most primitive of churchyards. There was no attempt at law or order, for the graves had just been put down between the trees wherever there was room for them. We noticed a painted clock on several of the wooden tombstones, evidently intended to indicate the exact hour at which the person lying under the sod had died. For instance, it would stand at twenty-two minutes to four o'clock, which was the precise moment the dead man expired, carefully noted by the exactitude of the Finns, who are very particular about such matters. In the newspapers, for example, it is stated, "Johansen died, aged 46 years 11 months and 4 days," and this record of the number of days is by no means uncommon. They are a most exact nation.

The *Maaninker* church, like so many others in Finland, has its important-looking bell-tower standing quite a distance away from the main building. We climbed to the top after a lot of persuasion, and certainly our trouble was repaid by a glorious view.

But, alas! every Finlander has a hobby, and that hobby is that at every point where there is a view of any sort or description, in fact, one might say where there is no view at all, he erects an *Aussichtsturm*. These outlook towers are a bane of existence to a stranger. One goes out to dinner and is taken for a walk round the island. At every conceivable point is an outlook tower, generally only a summer-

house, but, alas, there are usually some steps leading to the top which one toils up, and has the fatigue of doing so without any reward, as they are not high enough to afford any better view at the summit than one has at the base.

To go to the top of St. Peter's in Rome, St. Paul's in London, the Ysaak Church in Petersburg, are all worth the fatigue, but to toil up twenty steps on a hot summer's day and clamber down again, to repeat the operation a quarter of a mile farther on, and so *ad lib*, becomes somewhat monotonous, and one begins to wish in Finland that every outlook tower might be banished from the country. Stop, once we ascended an outlook tower that more than rewarded our labour. It was at *Kuopio*, which town we had just left—perhaps the most beautifully situated in all Finland—and as the night when we arrived chanced to be particularly brilliant, the view from the top of that outlook tower will be long treasured in remembrance!

To many of us the recollection of the past is a storehouse of precious gems; the realisation of the present is often without sparkle; yet the anticipation of the future is fraught with glitter, and the crown of happiness is ever before our eyes.

CHAPTER XV

ON WE JOG

It is difficult for strangers to travel through the heart of Finland, for every person may not be so lucky as to be passed on from one charming friend to another equally delightful, as we were; and, therefore, we would like to suggest the formation of a guides' bureau at *Helsingfors*, where men and women teachers from the schools—who are thoroughly well educated and always hold excellent social positions in Finland—could be engaged as couriers. These teachers speak English, French, and German, and would probably be glad to improve that knowledge for a few weeks by acting as friendly guides for a trifling sum in return for their expenses.

It is only a suggestion, but the schools being closed in July, August, and September, the teachers are then free, and voyageurs are willing to explore, though their imperfect knowledge of Finnish prevents their penetrating far from steamers and trains.

As we drove towards *Lapinlahti* we were surprised by many things; the smallness of the sheep, generally black, and very like their neighbours in *Astrakhan;* the hairiness of the pigs, often piebald; the politeness of the natives, all of whom curtsied or took off their hats; the delicious smell the sun was drawing out of the pine trees, and, perhaps more wonderful still, the luxuriance of gorgeously coloured wild-flowers, the numbers of singing birds, and, above all, the many delicious wild berries. The wild strawberries of Finland in July are surprising, great dishes of them appear

at every meal. The peasant children slice a foot square of bark from a birch tree, bend it into the shape of a box without a lid, then sew the sides together by the aid of their long native knives with a twig, and, having filled the basket, eagerly accept a penny for its contents. Every one eats strawberries. The peasants themselves half live on them, and, certainly, the wild berries of Switzerland are far less numerous, and not more sweet than those of Finland.

As evening draws on smoke rises from the proximity of the homesteads, and we wondered what it could be, for there are never any trees near the houses.

These are the cow-fires, lighted when the animals come to be milked. The poor creatures are so pestered and tormented by gnats and flies—of which Finland has more than her share—that fires are kindled towards evening, a dozen in one field sometimes, where they are to be milked, to keep the torments away. The cows are wonderfully clever, they know the value of the fires, and all huddle close up to them, glad of the restful reprieve after the worry they have endured all day. Poor patient beasts, there they stand chewing the cud, first with one side of their body turned towards the flames and then the other, the filmy smoke, the glow of the fire and the rays of the sunlight, hiding and showing distinctly by turns the girls and their kine. The dairymaids come with their stools to milk their soft-eyed friends, and on blazing hot summer evenings they all sit closely huddled round the fires together.

These milkmaids have some strange superstitions still lurking in their breasts, and the juice of the big birch tree is sometimes given to cows to make them yield better butter!

Lapinlahti is a typical Finnish village—town the Finns would call it, but then anything with over three hundred inhabitants is considered a township in that land—and has at least one newspaper of its own, so advanced are the folk.

Outside the little post-station we were much amused to read on a board "528 kilos. to St. Petersburg, 470 kilos. to Uleåborg." But we were more amazed on our return from a ramble, prepared to grumble that the meal ordered an hour before was not ready, when the host walked into the room and, making a most polite bow, said in excellent English—

"Good day, ladies."

"Do you speak English?" we asked.

"Certainly. I think I ought to after doing so for sixteen years."

We were immensely surprised. Who could have expected to find in the interior of Finland a peasant landlord who was also an English linguist? He seemed even more delighted to see us than we were to have an opportunity of learning something concerning the country from one speaking our own tongue so perfectly, for it is a little difficult to unravel intricate matters when the intermediary is a Swedish-speaking Finlander, who has to translate what the peasant says into French or German for your information, you again retranslating it into English for your own purposes.

Our host spoke English fluently, and it turned out that, having been a sailor like so many of the Finns, he had spent sixteen years of his life on board English vessels. He preferred them, he said, as the pay was twice as good as on the Finnish boats.

He told us that many of his countrymen went away to sea for a few years and saved money, the wise ones bringing it home and investing it in a plot of land; "but," he added, "they do not all succeed, for many of them have become so accustomed to a roving life, and know so little of farming, that they cannot manage to make it pay. I have worked very hard myself, and am getting along all right;" and, looking at his surroundings, we certainly thought he must be doing very well indeed.

The most remarkable rocking-chair we had ever seen in

our lives stood in his sitting-room. The Finlanders love rocking-chairs, but it is not often that they are double; our host's, however, was more than double—it was big enough for two fat Finlanders, or three ordinarily thin persons to sit in a row at the same time, and afforded us some amusement.

As there is hardly a house in Finland without its rocking-chair, so there is seldom a house which is not decorated somewhere or other with elk horns. The elk, like deer, shed their horns every year, and as Finland is crowded with these Arctic beasts, the horns are picked up in large quantities. They are handsome, but heavy, for the ordinary elk horn is far more ponderous in shape and weight and equal in width to a Scotch Royal. The ingenuity of the Finlander is great in making these handsome horns into hat-stands, umbrella-holders, stools, newspaper-racks, and portfolio-stands, or interlacing them in such a manner as to form a frieze round the top of the entrance hall in their homes. A really good pair will cost as much as twenty-five shillings, but when less well-grown, or in any way chipped or damaged, they can be bought for a couple of shillings.

A Finnish hall, besides its elk-horn decorations, is somewhat of a curiosity. For instance, at one of the Governor's houses where we chanced to dine, we saw for the first time with surprise what we repeatedly saw again in Finland. Along either wall was a wooden stand with rows and rows of pegs upon it for holding hats and coats. There were two pegs, one below the other, so that the coat might go beneath, while the hat resting over it did not get hurt. But below each of these pegs, a few inches from the floor, was a little wooden box with an open side. They really looked like forty or fifty small nests for hens to lay their eggs in, and we were very much interested to know what they could be for. What was our surprise to learn they were for goloshes!

In winter the younger guests arrive on snow-shoes

(*skidor*), but during any wet weather or when the road is muddy, during the thaws of spring, they always wear goloshes, and as it is considered the worst of taste to enter a room with dirty boots, the goloshes are left behind with the coat in the hall. This reminded us of Henrik Ibsen's home in Christiania, where the hall was strewn with goloshes. So much is this the fashion that we actually saw people walking about in indiarubber "gummies," as our American friends call them, during almost tropical weather. Habit becomes second nature.

Whether that meal at *Lapinlahti* was specially prepared for our honour or whether it was always excellent at that *majatalo* we cannot say, but it lingers in remembrance as one of the most luxurious feasts we had in the wilds of *Suomi*.

The heat was so great that afternoon as we drove towards *Iisalmi*—two or three inches of dust covering the roadways—that we determined to drive no more in the daytime, and that our future expeditions should be at night; a plan which we carried out most successfully. On future occasions we started at six in the afternoon, drove till midnight, and perhaps did a couple or three hours more at four or five in the morning; think of it!

After peeping into some well-arranged Free Schools, looking at a college for technical education, being invited with true Finnish hospitality to stay and sleep at every house we entered, we drew up at the next *majatalo* to *Lapinlahti*. It was the post-house, and at the same time a farm; but the first thing that arrested our attention was the smoke—it really seemed as if we were never to get away from smoke for forest-burning or cow-milking. This time volumes were ascending from the *sauna* or bath-house, for it was Saturday night, and it appeared as if the population were about to have their weekly cleansing. The *sauna* door was very small, and the person about to enter had to step up over a foot of boarding to effect his object, just as we were compelled to do on Fridtjof Nansen's ship the *Fram*,

when she lay in Christiania dock a week or two before leaving for her ice-drift, from which she has now so successfully returned. In the case of the *Fram* the doors were high up and small, to keep out the snow, as they are likewise in the Finnish peasants' homes, excepting when they arrange a snow-guard or sort of fore-chamber of loose pine trees, laid wigwam fashion on the top of one another, to keep back the drifts. We had hardly settled down to our evening meal—in the bedroom of course, everything is done in bedrooms in Finland, visitors received, etc.—before we saw a number of men and women hurrying to the *sauna*, where, in true native fashion, after undressing *outside*, all disappeared *en masse* into that tremendous hot vapour room, where they beat one another with birch branches dipped in hot water, as described in the chapter on Finnish baths. In *Kalevala* we read of these mixed baths thus—

> So he hastened to the bath-house,
> Found therein a gfoup of maidens
> Working each upon a birch broom.

When this performance was over they redressed *outside*, which is a custom even when the ground is deeply covered with snow.

Our host, a finely-made young fellow, fondly nursing a baby of about two years old, seeing our interest in everything, was very anxious we should join the bath party, and begged Baron George to tell us of its charms, an invitation we politely but firmly refused. He showed his home. When we reached a room upstairs—for the house actually possessed two storeys—we stood back amazed. Long poles suspended from ropes hung from the ceiling, and there in rows, and rows, and rows, we beheld clothing, mostly underlinen. Some were as coarse as sacking; others were finer; but there seemed enough for a regiment—something like the linen we once saw in a harem in Tangier, but Tangier is a hot country where change of raiment is often necessary, and the owner was a rich man, while Finland is for most

part of the year cold, and our landlord only a farmer. The mystery was soon explained; the farmer had to provide clothing for all his labourers—a strange custom of the country—and these garments were intended for eight or nine servants, as well as a large family. Moreover, as washing in the winter with ice-covered lakes is a serious matter, two or three big washes a year are all Finns can manage, the spring wash being one of the great events in their lives. The finer linen belonged to his family, the coarser to the labourers, and there must have been hundreds of articles in that loft.

When we left the room he locked the door carefully, and hung up the key beside it. This is truly Finnish. One arrives at a church; the door is locked, but one need not turn away, merely glance at the woodwork round the door, where the key is probably hanging. It is the same everywhere—in private houses, baths, churches, hotels; even in more primitive parts one finds the door locked for safety—from what we know not, as honesty is proverbial in Finland—and the key hung up beside it for convenience.

Our night's lodging disclosed another peculiarity;—nothing is more mysterious than a Finnish bed. In the daytime every bed is shut up. The two wooden ends are pushed together within three feet of one another, kaleidoscope fashion, the mattress, pillows, etc., being doubled between; but more than that, many of the little beds pull also out into double ones from the sides—altogether the capacities of a *Suomi* couch are wondrous and remarkable. Yet, again, the peasants' homes contain awfully hard straight wooden sofas, terrible-looking things, and out of the box part comes the bedding, the boards of the seat forming the *soft* couch on which weary travellers seek repose, and often do not find it!

Finnish beds are truly terrible; for wood attracts unpleasant things, and beds which are not only never aired, but actually packed up, are scarcely to be recommended in hot weather. One should have the skin of a rhinoceros

and no sense of smell to rest in the peasant homes of *Suomi* during the hot weather. Seaweed was formerly used for stuffing mattresses on the coast in England; indeed some of such bedding still remains at Walmer Castle; but the plant in use for that purpose in the peasant homes of Finland gives off a particularly stuffy odour.

The country and its people are most captivating and well worth studying, even though the towns are nearly all ugly and uninteresting. Hospitality is rife; but the peasants must keep their beds in better order and learn something of sanitation if they hope to attract strangers. As matters are, everything is painfully primitive, spite of the rooms—beds excepted—being beautifully clean.

In winter sportsmen hunt the wild bear of Finland; at all seasons elk are to be seen, only no one dare shoot them nowadays. There are long-haired wild-looking pigs roving about that might do for an impromptu pig-stick. There are feathered fowl in abundance, and fish for the asking, many kinds of sport and many kinds of hunts, but, alas, there is a very important one we would all gladly do without—and that is the zoological gardens in the peasant's bed! Possibly the straw mattresses or *luikko* may be the cause, or the shut-up wooden frames of the bedstead, or the moss used to keep the rooms warm and exclude draughts, still the fact remains that, while the people themselves bathe often and keep their homes clean, their beds are apt to shock an unhappy traveller who, though he have to part with all his comforts and luggage on a *kärra* ride, should, if he value his life, stick fast to insect powder and ammonia!

Well we remember a horrible experience. We had driven all day, and were dead tired when we retired to rest, where big, fat, well-nourished brown things soon disturbed our peace; and, judging by the number of occupants that shared our couch, the peasant had let his bed out many times over! Sitting bolt up, we killed one, two, three, then we turned over and tried again to sleep; but a few

moments and up we had to sit once more. Keating had failed utterly—Finnish bed-fiends smile at Keating—four, five, six—there they were like an advancing army. At last we could stand it no longer, and passed the night in our deck-chairs. In the morning we peeped at the nice linen sheets; sprinkled on the beds were brown-red patches, here and there as numerous as plums in a pudding, each telling the horrible tale of murders committed by English-women.

We had to rough it while travelling from *Kuopio* to *Uleåborg.* Often eggs, milk, and black bread with good butter were the only reliable forms of food procurable, and the jolting of the carts was rather trying; but the clothes of the party suffered even more than ourselves—one shoe gradually began to part company with its sole, one straw hat gradually divided its brim from its crown, one of the men's coats nearly parted company from its sleeve, and the lining inside tore and hung down outside. We had not time to stop and mend such things as we might have mended, so we gradually grew to look worse and worse, our hair turning gray with dust, and our faces growing copper-coloured with the sun. We hardly looked up to West End style! and our beauty, if we ever possessed any, was no longer delicate and ethereal, but ruddy and robust. We were in the best of health and spirits, chaffing and laughing all day long, for what is the use of grumbling and growling over discomforts that cannot be helped—and half the joy of *companions de voyage* is to laugh away disagreeables at the time, or to chat over curious reminiscences afterwards.

Never less alone than when alone is a true maxim; but not for travelling; a pleasant companion adds a hundred-fold to the pleasures of the journey, especially when the friendship is strong enough to stand the occasional strains on the temper which must occur along wild untrodden paths.

On that memorable drive through *Savolax* in Northern

Finland, we paid a somewhat amusing and typical visit to a *Pappi* (clergyman) at a *Prästgård*, or rectory. These country *Luthersk Kyrka* (Lutheran churches) are few and far between, a minister's district often extending eight or ten miles in every direction, and his parishioners therefore numbering about 6000 or 8000, many of whom come ten miles or more to church, as they do in the Highlands of Scotland, where the Free Kirk is almost identical with the Lutheran Church of Finland. In both cases the post of minister is advertised as vacant, applicants send in names, which are "sifted," after which process the most suitable are asked to come and perform a service, and finally the *Pappi* of Finland, or minister of Scotland, is chosen by the people.

There is seldom an organ in the Finnish country churches, and hardly ever in the Scotch Highlands—each religion has, however, its precentor or *Lukkari*, who leads the singing; both churches are very simple and plain—merely whitewashed—perhaps one picture over the altar—otherwise no ornamentation of any kind.

On one of our long drives we came to a village proudly possessing a church and a minister all to itself, and, being armed with an introduction to the *Pappi*, we arranged to call at the *Prästgård* (rectory).

"Yes," replied a small boy with flaxen locks, "the *Pappi* is at home." Hearing which good news in we went. It was a large house for Finland, where a pastor is a great person. There were stables and cow-sheds, a granary, and quite a nice-sized one-storeyed wooden house. We marched into the salon—a specimen of every other drawing-room one meets; the wooden floor was painted ochre, and polished, before each window stood large india-rubber plants, and between the double windows was a layer of Iceland moss to keep out the draughts of winter, although at the time of our visit in July the thermometer stood somewhere about 90° Fahr., as it often does in Finland during summer, when the heat is sometimes intense. Before the

middle window was the everlasting high-backed prim sofa of honour, on which the stranger or distinguished guest is always placed; before it the accustomed small table, with its white mat lying diamond fashion over the stuff cloth cover, all stiff and neat; also at other corners of the room were other tables surrounded by half a dozen similarly uncomfortable chairs, and in the corner was that rocking-chair which is never absent from any home. Poor Finlanders! they do not even know the luxury of a real English armchair, or a Chesterfield sofa, but always have to sit straight up as if waiting to eat their dinner—very healthy, no doubt, but rather trying to those accustomed to less formal drawing-room arrangements. But then it must be remembered that everything is done to encourage general conversation in Finland, and the rooms seem specially set out with that object.

In a moment one of the three double doors opened, and a lady of middle age, wearing a cotton gown, entered, and bade us welcome. She could only speak Finnish, so, although we all smiled graciously, conversation came to an untimely end, for Finnish is as unlike English, French, German, or even Swedish, as Gaelic is to Greek. Happily the *Pappi* soon appeared; a fine-looking man with a beard and a kindly face. He spoke Swedish, and could understand a few German words; so he spoke Swedish, we spoke German very slowly, and the conversation, although, as may be imagined, not animated, was quite successful, particularly as it was helped occasionally by a translation from our cicerone, who could talk French fluently. We were particularly struck by a splendid old clock, wondrously painted, which stood in a corner of the room. A grandfather's clock is a very common piece of furniture in Finland, and in many of the farm-houses we visited we saw the queer old wooden cases we love so well in England, painted with true native art. Just as the Norwegians love ornamenting their woodwork with strange designs, so the Finns are partial to geometrical drawings of all descriptions; therefore

corner cupboards, old bureaus, and grandfather clocks often come in for this form of decoration. Another favourite idea is to have a small cup of shot on the writing-table, into which the pen is dug when not in use—and sand is still used in many places instead of blotting-paper.

While the *Pappi* was explaining many things, his wife had slipped away, as good wives in *Suomi* always do, to order or make the coffee, because no matter at what time one pays a visit, coffee and cakes invariably appear in about half an hour; it is absolute rudeness to leave before they come, and it is good taste to drink two cups, although not such an offence to omit doing so as it is to leave a Moorish home without swallowing three cups of sweet mint-flavoured tea!

We were getting on nicely with our languages, endlessly repeating *Voi, Voi*, which seems to be as useful in Finnish as *so* in German, helped by a good deal of polite smiling, when a door opened and mamma returned, followed by a boy of seventeen, who was introduced as "our son." We got up and shook hands. He seized our finger, and bowed his head with a little jerk over it—that was not all, however, for, as if desirous of dislocating his neck, he repeated the performance with a second handshake. This was extra politeness on his part — two handshakes, two jerky bows; we felt highly honoured!

By the time he had finished, we realised that another boy, a little younger, was standing behind ready to continue the entertainment.

Then came a girl, and seven small children, all brushed up and made beautiful for the occasion, marched in in a row to make acquaintance with the *Englantililajset*, each, after he or or she had greeted us, quietly sitting down at one of the other tables, where they all remained placidly staring during the rest of the visit. A circle is considered the right thing in Finland, and the old people alone talk—the young folk listening, and, let us hope, improving their minds! Coffee came at last; a funny little maid, with her

hair in a long plait, brought in a tray, with a pretty embroidered cloth, a magnificent plated coffee-pot, luscious cream, and most appetising cakes, something like shortbread, and baked at home. We ate and we drank, we smiled upon the homely hostess, we shook hands with her, and all the children in a row on leaving, and the pastor, with a huge bunch of keys, accompanied us to see his church, which, funnily enough, we could only reach with the help of a small boat—all very well in the summer when boats can go, or in the winter when there is ice to cross, but rather disheartening at the mid-seasons, when crossing becomes a serious business and requires great skill. There was a "church boat" lying near by, a great huge cumbersome sort of concern that twelve people could row at a time, and two or three times as many more stand or sit in, and on Sundays this boat plied to and fro with the congregation. The church boats are quite an institution in Finland. They will sometimes hold as many as a hundred persons—like the old pilgrim boats—some twenty or thirty taking the oars at once. It is etiquette for every one to take a turn at rowing, and, as the church is often far away from the parishioners, it is no unusual thing for the church boat to start on Saturday night, when the Sabbath is really supposed to begin, and it is quite a feature in the life of *Suomi* to see the peasants arriving on Saturday evening at the waterside, at the appointed time for starting to their devotions, with their little bundles of best clothes. They are all very friendly, and as they row to the church they generally sing, for there is no occasion on which a number of Finns meet together that they do not burst into song.

Arrived at the church, they put up for the night at the homesteads round about, for be it understood the church is often some distance even from a village; or, if balmy summer, they lie down beneath the trees and, under the brilliant canopy of heaven, take their rest.

When morning comes the women don their black frocks,

the black or white head-scarves, take their Bibles—neatly folded up in white handkerchiefs—from their pockets, and generally prepare themselves for the great event of the week. When the church service, which lasts some hours, is over, they either turn up their skirts, or more often than not take off their best things and, putting them back into the little bundle, prepare to row home again.

The church boats are, of course, only used in the summer; in the winter the route is much shortened by the universal snow and ice, which makes it possible to sledge over land or sea alike, and make many short cuts. On a later date we went to a Sabbath service at a *Luthersk Kyrka*, and a very remarkable affair it proved. As we drove up to the church about one o'clock, we found over 100 *kärra* or native carts standing outside. In these funny "machines," as our Scotch friends would rightly call them, many of the congregation had arrived, and, after having tied their horses to the railings outside, gone in to service. The church held nearly 4000 people, and every man and woman present was a peasant. The building was crowded to excess, the sexes being divided by the centre aisle. Nearly every one wore black, that being considered the proper wear for Sundays, weddings, etc., especially for the married women, who also wore black silk handkerchiefs over their heads. Each woman carried a large white handkerchief in her hand, upon which she leaned her head while praying. Subsequently we found that all the females rolled their prayer-books up in these cloths while carrying them home.

Service had begun at ten, so that three hours of it was over when we arrived, and the Communion, which lasted another hour and a half, was about to begin. The place was packed, the day very hot, and the peasant atmosphere a little oppressive. We were much struck by the children; mere babies actually being nursed by their mothers, while elder urchins walked in and out of the building—going sometimes to have a game with various other little friends amidst the graves outside, plaiting daisy-chains, or telling fortunes by

large ox-eyed daisies. The men walked out also and enjoyed a pipe or gossip with a neighbour, and there was that general air of freedom which prevails in a Roman Catholic Church during divine service; nevertheless, the intense simplicity, the devotion, the general inclination to moan and weep, reminded us of the Highland Kirk. But it was very surprising to hear the Pastor tell his congregation that at a certain day he would be at an appointed place to receive grain, butter, potatoes, calves, etc. The clergymen are paid in kind, which to them is a very suitable arrangement, as they are generally peasants' sons and well able to attend to their own glebes; but it did sound funny to hear a clergyman, standing in the pulpit, talk of butter and eggs.

When the congregation stood up we naturally stood up with them. The Finlanders are short, and for two women five feet six or seven high, with hats on the tops of their heads, suddenly to rise, amazed a congregation the female members of which were seldom taller than five feet one or two, and wore nothing on their heads but a flat handkerchief. We felt like giraffes towering over the rest of the people, and grew gradually more and more ashamed of our height and hats, simple though the latter were. How we longed to be short and have our heads covered with black silk handkerchiefs like the rest of the folk around, so as to be unnoticeable in their midst.

We felt we were a very disturbing influence; for, gradually, those who had not noticed our entrance began to realise there was something strange in the church, and nudged their friends to look at two tall women—dark into the bargain—each with a hat on her head. Their surprise might be forgiven, for to them we must have appeared strange apparitions indeed. In that church there was no organ, but a young man got up and started the singing, just as a precentor does in the Highlands; having once given them the tune, that vast congregation followed his lead very much at their own sweet wills.

For our own part, certainly, we came away much im-

pressed by their devoutness, and not a little touched and interested by the Lutheran service.

When we came out some of the men, who had previously slipped away, were beginning to harness their ponies in order to drive very possibly ten miles. Little groups were also forming to enjoy the luncheons brought in handkerchiefs, ere starting to walk back long distances to their homes.

Verily we might have been in Scotland; there were the gossips round the church doors, the plate to hold the pence, covered with a white cloth, ay, and even the dogs were waiting; there were the women lifting up their black skirts, inside out, exactly as her Highland sister when attired in her best gown. How like in many characteristics the two nations are.

It seems ridiculous to be always writing of the intense heat in Finland, but as it is generally supposed to be a cold country, where furs and rugs are necessary even in the summer, we could not help being struck by the fact of the almost tropical temperature, at times, which we encountered all through June and July, and part of August 1896. It is a fact that although in Finland the winters are terribly long and severe, the summers are extremely hot.

Just before reaching *Iisalmi* we turned in at the gate of *Herr Stochman*, a large gentleman-farmer to whom we had an introduction, which proved a most pleasant visit. He was a delightful man, hospitality personified; and his wife at once invited us to stay with them, utter strangers though we were.

He has a sort of agricultural college, in the dairy department of which we were specially interested. Our host takes twenty peasants at a time, who remain for a two years' course. In the summer they are taught practical farming out of doors, in the winter theoretical, indoors.

It was a wonderful institution, splendidly organised, very well kept, and quite a model in its way. Indeed, it is amazing to see how advanced the Finlanders are in all matters of technical education, and there is no doubt

but that the future of *Suomi* will be the outcome of the present teaching.

Adjoining was a *Mejeri*, where a dozen women were being instructed in butter and cheese-making. The butter all goes to England, while the cheese is an excellent copy of our own cheddar!

Poor old Albion!

Butter and cheese-making is quite a new trade, pursued with energy in Finland.

Twenty or thirty years ago dairying was almost unknown in Denmark, and now Denmark is a rich country which has established over 1200 creameries, and sends to England alone some £7,000,000 sterling of butter annually, to say nothing of eggs and bacon.

Finland not having been slow to see the extent to which Denmark has succeeded, *Mejeris* are being established here and there over the land for the making of butter and cheese; indeed, there are about 200 of them already, though some are only small as yet.

Imagine our surprise when driving along a country road, right in the very wilds of Finland, to see a vast herd of cows being driven home to be milked; yet this happened several times.

"Where are they going?" we asked on one occasion; "how can so few families require so much milk?"

"They are going to the creamery," was the reply. "This neighbourhood could not use the milk, which is all made into cheese, and the cream into butter, to be exported to England."

Being much interested in the subject, having written the pamphlet *Danish* versus *English Butter-making*, we of course stopped to see the creamery, and were amazed to find it conducted on the latest scientific Danish principles, and, although established little over a year, in full working order.

The proprietor only owned 60 cows, but he had the milk sent in from 100 more, and exactly as they re-

turn the skim milk in Denmark, so they return it in Finland. By a careful process of autumn calving, the Finnish dairymen manage to have most milk in the winter, when they make butter, which they send 70 miles by sledge to the nearest railway train, to be borne hence to *Hangö*, the only port in Finland that is open during the winter months. There it meets a steamer which conveys it to England.

The following table will give some idea of the butter thus exported, and the rapid rate of increase:—

	Kilograms (about 2 lbs.)
1874	5,159,885
1884	4,504,247
1894	13,335,069

This butter went to Denmark, whence it was said to be transhipped to England.

2,433 million marks (a mark is a shilling) went to Russia.
6,732 million marks direct to England.

Formerly all the butter was sent to Russia; but Russia, like every other country, except England, woke up and began making her own butter. Finland, however, does not suffer, she merely ships to England direct, or through Denmark to England instead, and the trade in ten years has trebled itself.

Few of us in England realise that we pay over £37,000 sterling out of this country every day for butter consumed by a people unable to make it for themselves. England imported £13,470,419 worth of butter in 1894! About a third of that butter came from Denmark, to which country Finland promises to be a fair rival before many years roll by.

We stayed at the *Mejeri* late into the night, for we were always making mistakes as to time in that bewilderingly everlasting daylight.

One of my sister's greatest joys, and one of my greatest discomforts, was a kodak. Now, a kodak is one of those hard uncomfortable things that refuses to be packed anywhere; it takes up too much room in a Gladstone bag, it is apt to get broken in the rug-strap, and, therefore, the wretched little square box invariably has to be carried at all inconvenient times and seasons. However, as there were no photographs to be procured of Northern Finland, and my sister declared there was no time for me to make any sketches, we decided to struggle with the kodak, and I tried to bear the annoyance of its presence in the anticipation of the joy of future results. My sister kodaked here and kodaked there; she jumped out of the little cart and made snap-shots of old peasants and older houses, of remarkable-looking pigs and famine-stricken chickens. In fact, she and the kodak were here, there, and everywhere, and glorious reproductions were anticipated. Each day she exclaimed, "What a mercy we have not to wait for you to sketch. Why, I can do twenty or thirty pictures while you do one." I felt the reproof and was silenced.

Then came a day when the roll of a hundred had to be changed. We all know the everlasting cry, the endless excuse for bad photographs. "You see, the light got in;" and generally the offender, we learn, is some ruthless custom-house official, who cares nothing for travel and less for art, and whose one joy is unearthing cigars and disturbing ladies' bonnets! This time "the light got in" with a vengeance. For a couple of days my wretched sister endeavoured to find a place to change that roll, but in a land where there is continual day it is absolutely impossible to find night!

We inquired for cellars, we even sought for a cave—all unsuccessfully; and so the night we left the *Mejeri* she decided that the roll *must* be changed, and darkness secured somehow. There were two windows to our bedroom; we had two travelling rugs; one was pinned up over each window, but the light streamed in above and

below and round the curtains. We then pinned up our skirts, but even that was not sufficient; we added bodices to the arrangement, the length of the sleeves filling up inconvenient cracks, but the light still streamed under and above and round the two doors. We laid pillows on the floor, and got rid of that streak of illumination; we stuffed the sides and top with towels, but even then there was a wretched grayness in our chamber which forbode ill.

"I know," exclaimed my sister, "I shall get under the bed." But as the bed was of wood and very low, she only succeeded in getting her own head and the kodak beneath its wooden planks, while I carefully built her in with blankets and eider-downs, and left her to stifle on a dreadfully hot night with a nasty-smelling little lamp under the mattresses.

She groaned and she sighed, but at last she emerged triumphant, if very hot, from the undertaking. Particularly happy in the result of our midnight performances, she started another roll, and felt assured that she had a hundred excellent photographs of the life of the people in the interior of Finland. Only after we returned to London did the terrible truth reveal itself; the light had indeed got in, and one after another of the films, as they were taken from their bath, disclosed nothing but gray blackness!

The laugh (and the cry) was on my side now. Why, oh why, had I not persevered with the sketches, instead of only doing one at our midnight haven of rest in the *Uleåborg* rapids?

CHAPTER XVI

A 'TORP' AND 'TORPPARI' WEDDING

LIKE most Finnish towns, *Iisalmi* proved somewhat disappointing. We waited to rest, to collect letters and answer them, to bathe and mend our clothes, and then gladly jogged on again.

Our start from *Iisalmi* for *Kajana* was somewhat remarkable. Having dined and enjoyed our coffee, we had ordered the *kärra* for five o'clock, well knowing that, in consequence of the Finns' slowness, it would take at least an hour to pack our luggage away. The queer little two-wheeled vehicles drove into the courtyard. They had no springs, and no hood to protect us from the rain or sun; but were merely fragile little wooden carts, such as are used by the natives themselves. The seat was placed across them dog-cart fashion, and behind it and under it the luggage had to be stowed. Verily, we were starting through Finland in carts!

Our party often varied, and on this occasion we mustered six in all; therefore, as a *kärra* holds but two, three of these primitive little vehicles were required for our accommodation. We were very anxious to dispense with the services of the coachmen, two of them at all events, as we had often done before, for it seemed quite ridiculous, considering we always drove ourselves, to take two men with us who were not wanted, and whose extra weight told on a long country journey. But not a bit of it; no amount of persuasion could induce

them to stop behind. They were looking forward to the trip with pleasurable excitement, and evidently considered travelling with English ladies a special honour. The amount of talking and discussing and arranging that went on over this simple matter is appalling to think about even now. First of all they said there was too much luggage, although they had already interviewed the luggage the day before. Then they declared that if they took it they must be paid ten marks extra for doing so; then they packed all the heavy articles into one *kärra*, and all the light into another, and finally came to the conclusion that this plan would not answer, and unpacked everything again. It really became ridiculous at last, and we sat on the steps of the little hostelry and roared with laughter to see them shaking their fists first at each other, and then at our unoffending Finnish friends, while measuring the Gladstones or thumping the rugs. All this fuss was about three Gladstones, a small dress-basket, only the size of a Gladstone, a bundle of rugs, and a basket full of provisions!

By half-past six, however, matters were amicably settled, and the patient little ponies, which had stood perfectly still throughout the squabble, feeling us mount into our places, started off at a full gallop out of the town before we had even caught the reins. Sheer bravado on the part of the ponies, or one might perhaps better say training, for it is the habit of the country to go out of towns with a dash, and enter after the same fashion.

As a rule the coachman sits on the feet of the off-side occupant of the *kärra*, holding the reins immediately over the splash-board, and dangling his feet somewhere above the step. If he does not do this, he hangs on by his eyelashes behind, balanced on the top of the luggage.

Our men, or rather lads, afforded us much amusement before we parted with them two days later, for their interest in us was quite wonderful, and, finding that we were surprised at many things to which they were quite accustomed, they began showing off every trifle with the air

of princes. When they came to a friend's house on the route they invited us to enter, consequently we drank milk with many queer folk, and patted the heads of numerous native children.

After our gentlemen had finally paid these coachmen and given them their tips at *Kajana*, some days later our sitting-room door burst open, and in the three solemnly filed, cap in hand, looking somewhat shy, and formally went through the process of handshaking with us all in turn. If the warmth of their affections was meant to be conveyed by the strength of their grip, they must have loved us very much indeed, for our fingers tingled for an hour afterwards; but the funniest part of all, perhaps, was the whisper of one in my ear. Finnish was his language; I did not understand a word and shook my head; when, putting his mouth still closer to my ear, he murmured the words again. Alas! I could not understand, and he knew it; yet his anxiety was so great he tried and tried again to make me comprehend. "Take me to England," at last I understood was the translation of the words the nervous youth, with many blushes and much twirling of his cap, kept repeating. But firmly and decisively I declined the honour, and he left quite crestfallen.

An ordinary peasant's house is called a *torp*, and the inhabitants are termed *torppari*. They can only be likened to the crofters in the poorer parts of Scotland; but where the crofter builds his house of stone, the *torppari* erects his of wood; where the crofter burns peat and blackens his homestead absolutely, the *torppari* uses wood, and therefore the peat reek is missing, and the ceilings and walls merely browned; where the crofter sometimes has only earth for his flooring, the *torp* is floored neatly with wood, although that wood is often very much out of repair, the walls shaky with age, extra lumps of Iceland moss being poked in everywhere to keep out the snow and rain.

Before the door was a sort of half wigwam made of tree trunks, standing outwards with the top end leaning

against the house; this was to protect the door from the winter snows, to make a sort of screen in fact, so that it need not be dug out every day as is sometimes necessary. The door itself was only about three feet high, and began a foot from the ground,—another plan to keep back the encroaching snow. Yet these *torps* are very superior, and the inhabitants much richer than those wretched folk who dwell in the *Savupirtti*, a house without a chimney!

There are many such queer abodes in Finland, more especially in the *Savo* or *Savolax* districts there yet remain a large number of these *Savupirtti*, the name given to a chimneyless house in the nominative singular in Finnish, famous as we know for its sixteen cases, which so alter the original that to a stranger the word becomes unrecognisable.

To a foreigner these *Savupirtti* are particularly interesting, and as we drove through the country we peeped into several of such curious homesteads, all more or less alike, and all absolutely identical in their poverty.

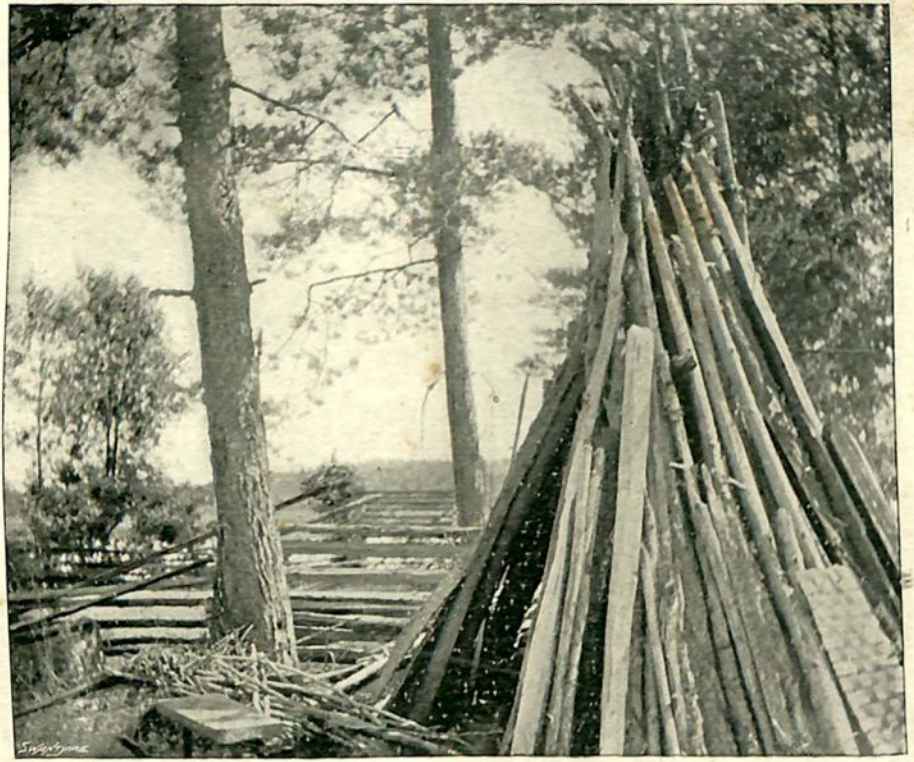
Seeing a queer tumbledown little hovel without a chimney by the wayside, we called "*bur-r-r*" to the pony, which, like all good Scandinavian horses, immediately drew up, and, throwing down the knotted blue cotton reins, we hopped out, our student friend proceeding to take the top rail off the gate to admit of our clambering over the remaining bars. These strange loose fences are a speciality of Finland, and although they look so shaky and tumbledown, they withstand the winter storms, which is no slight matter. The gates do not open; they are simply small pine trunks laid from one fence to the other, or any chance projecting bough, and when the peasant wants to open them, he pulls them out and wrecks the whole fragile construction. It saves locks and hinges, even nails, or, the native equivalent, tying with silver-birch twigs; but it is a ramshackle sort of contrivance nevertheless.

In we went to see a chimneyless cot. See, did we say? Nay, we could not see anything until our eyes became

accustomed to the dim light. It was a tiny room, the stove occupying almost half the available space; there was no proper chimney; the hole at the top did not always accomplish the purpose for which it was intended, consequently the place was black with ancient smoke, and suffocating with modern fumes. The floor was carpeted with whole birch boughs, the leaves of which were drying in the atmosphere as winter fodder for the one treasured cow. For the cow is a greater possession to the Finn than his pig to the Irishman. The other quarter of the room contained a loom, and the space left was so limited we were not surprised that the dame found her little outside kitchen of much use. Two very small windows (not made to open) lighted the apartment; so how those folk saw during the long dark winter days was a mystery to us, for they made their own candles they said, just as English folks formerly made dips, and we all know the illumination from dips is uncertain and not brilliant. Still smoke, want of ventilation, and scarcity of light did not seem to have made them blind, although it had certainly rendered them prematurely old.

Beyond was the bedroom, so low that a man could only stand upright in the middle; the wooden bed was folded away for the day, and the rough wooden table and bench denoted signs of an approaching meal, for a black bread loaf lay upon the table, and a wooden bowl of *piimeä* was at hand.

Standing on the little barley patch which surrounded the house, we saw a sort of wigwam composed of loose fir-tree trunks. They leant against one another, spread out because of their greater size at the bottom, and narrowed to a kind of open chimney at the top. This was the housewife's extra kitchen, and there on a heap of stones a wood fire was smouldering, above which hung a cauldron for washing purposes. How like the native wigwam of Southern climes was this Northern kitchen—in the latter case only available during the warm weather, but



OUTSIDE KITCHEN

then the family washing for the year is done in summer, and sufficient *råglröd* also baked for many months' consumption. Before we had finished inspecting this simple culinary arrangement, the housewife arrived. She was no blushing maid, no beautiful fresh peasant girl. Blushing, beautiful maids don't exist in Finland, for which want the Mongolian blood or the climate is to blame, as well as hard work. The girls work hard before they enter their teens, and at seventeen are quite like old women. The good body who welcomed us was very much pleased to see visitors in her little *Savupirtti*, and delighted to supply us with fresh milk, for, in spite of their terrible poverty, these *torppari* possessed a cow—who does not in Finland?—wherein lies the source of their comparative wealth. The Highland crofter, on the other hand, rarely owns even a pig!

Naturally the advent of three *kärra* created considerable sensation, and the old woman had immediately hurried to call her husband, so that he also might enjoy a look at the strangers. Consequently, he stood in the doorway awaiting our arrival.

Of course they neither of them wore any shoes or stockings. Even the richer peasants, who possess shoes, more often than not preferably walk barefoot in the summer, while stockings are unknown luxuries, a piece of rag occasionally acting as a substitute.

The old lady's short serge skirt was coarsely woven, her white shirt was loose and clean, her apron was striped in many colours, after the native style, and all were "woven by herself," she told us with great pride. On her hair she wore a black cashmere kerchief. Her face might have belonged to a woman of a hundred, or a witch of the olden days, it was so wrinkled and tanned. Her hands were hard and horny, and yet, after half an hour's conversation, we discovered she was only about fifty-five, and her man seventy. But what a very, very old pair they really seemed! Weather-beaten and worn, poorly fed during the greater part of their lives, they were emaciated, and

the stooping shoulders and deformed hands denoted hard work and a gray sort of life. They seemed very jolly, nevertheless, this funny old pair. Perhaps it was our arrival, or perhaps in the warm sunny days they have not time to look on the dark side of things while gathering in the little tufts of grass that grow among the rocky boulders, drying birch leaves for the cow for winter, attending to the small patch of rye—their greatest earthly possession—or mending up the *Savupirtti* ere the first snows of August are upon them, that made them so cheerful.

The old woman was much more romantically inclined than the man. The Finnish character is slow and does not rush into speech; but a friendly pat on one grandchild's head, and a five-penni piece to the other, made our hostess quite chirpy. "May God's blessing accompany your journey," she said at parting; "may He protect the English ladies."

We got into cordial relations by degrees, and our friend the student, seeing a piece of woven band hanging up, asked its use.

"Ah," she answered, "that was one of the pieces the bridegroom gave to his groomsmen."

She was greatly delighted at our evident interest in her concerns, and told us how her son, when about twenty, met with a girl of another village, and took a fancy to her. (By law a girl must be fifteen, and a boy eighteen, and able to prove they have something to live on before they can marry.)

"He saw her many times, and decided to ask her to be his wife," she continued. "He had met the girl when he was working at her father's house, so he sent a *puhemies*, or spokesman, to ask for the girl's hand."

This personage is generally chosen from among the intended bridegroom's best friends, as in the days of *Kalevala*, and usually is possessed of a ready tongue. The *puhemies* still plays a very important rôle, for not only does he ask for the girl's hand (while the suitor sits like

a mute), but he is obliged to help at the wedding ceremony and feast, and also has to provide, from his own purse, brandy and coffee for all the guests.

After the proposal was accepted, our old friend told us there was an exchange of rings, her son got his bride such a splendid wide gold band—much wider than hers—and it was arranged that they would marry when the man had collected enough goods, and the girl had woven sufficient linen and stuffs to stock the little home.

"Of course," exclaimed the voluble old lady, "my son gave the *kihlarahat*."

"What is that?" we asked.

"Why, it is a sort of deposit given to the girl's father to show he really means to marry the girl. A cow, or something of that sort, denotes he is in earnest, and my son also gave money to the girl herself to buy things for their future household."

"How long were they engaged?"

"Two years—for we are poor, and it took that time to collect enough to get married. Ah, but the marriage was a grand thing, it was!" and the old hag chuckled to herself at the remembrance.

All these things and many more the proud mother told us, till at last she became completely engrossed in the tale of her son's wedding. He was her only boy, and she talked of him and of his doings with as much pride as if he had been the greatest hero of this or any century. She informed us how, a month before the wedding, the young couple had gone to the pastor dressed in their best, the *puhemics*, of course, accompanying them, and there arranged to have the banns read three Sundays in the bride's district. We were struck by this strange resemblance to our own customs, and learnt that the publication of banns is quite universal in Finland.

"The wedding was here," she went on, warming to her narrative, "for, naturally, the wedding always takes place at the bridegroom's house."

Looking round at the extremely small two-roomed hovel, we wondered how it was possible to have *läksiäiset* or *polterabend*, as our German friends call the festival before the wedding, at this bridegroom's house, for the one little sitting-room and the one little bedroom combined did not cover a larger space of ground than an ordinary billiard table.

"It is a very expensive thing to get married," she continued, "and my son had to give many presents to the *Appi* (father-in-law), *Anoppi* (mother-in-law), *Morsianpiiat* (bridesmaids), *Sulhasrengit* (groomsmen), etc."

Knowing the poverty of the place and the distance from a town where goods could be purchased, we enquired the sort of presents he gave.

"To all the bridesmaids," she said, "he gave *Sukat* (stockings), that being the fashion of the country, to the groomsmen he gave *piata* (shirts), to his mother-in-law, the *Anoppi*, he gave a *baatteet* (dress), and to the *Appi* he gave a *vyö* (belt). Then to various other friends he distributed *nuivit* (head handkerchiefs)," and altogether the wedding became a very serious drain on the family resources.

"But oh! it was a lovely time," she exclaimed rapturously. "A wedding is a splendid thing. We had a feast all that day and the next day, and then the priest came and they were married."

"Did many friends come to the wedding?" we ventured to ask.

"Oh yes, certainly, every one we knew came from miles round. Some brought a can of milk, and some brought corn brandy, and others brought *groatz* (porridge), and *Jahansen* had been to *Iisalmi*, so he brought back with him some white bread. Ay, it was a grand feast," and she rubbed her hands again and again, and positively smacked her lips at the recollection of the festival. "We danced, and ate, and sang, and made merry for two days, and then we all walked with my son and his bride to that little *torp* on the other side of the wood, and left them there, where they have lived ever since."

"Do you generally stay long in the same house in Finland?"

"Of course," she replied, "I came here when I was a bride, and I shall never leave it till I am a corpse."

This led to her telling us of the last funeral in the neighbourhood. A man died, and, according to custom, he was laid out in an outhouse. The coffin, made by a peasant friend, was brought on a sledge, and, it being March with snow on the ground—"to the rumble of a snow sledge swiftly bounding," as they say in *Kalevala*. The corpse on the fourth day was laid in the coffin, and placed in front of the house door. All the friends and relatives arrived for the final farewell. Each in turn went up to the dead man; the relations kissed him (it will be remembered the royal party kissed the corpse of the late Tzar before his funeral in the Fortress Church at St. Petersburg), and his friends all shook him by the hand. Then the coffin was screwed down, laid across a pony's back, to which it was securely strapped, and away they all trudged to the cemetery to bury their friend.

She went on to tell us of a curious old fashion in Finland, not altogether extinct. During the time that a corpse is being laid out and washed, professional women are engaged to come and sing "the corpse song." This is a weird melancholy chant, joined in by the relations as far as they are able, but chiefly undertaken by the paid singers. This confirmed what two of the *Runo* singers at *Sordavala* had told us, that they were often hired out to perform this lament, and, as we were much interested in such a quaint old custom, we asked them at the time if they would repeat it for us. They seemed delighted. The two women stood up opposite one another, and each holding her handkerchief over her eyes, rolled herself backwards and forwards slowly singing the melancholy dirge the while. They had a perfect fund of song these *Runo* women, of whom our friend at the *Savupirtti* constantly reminded us; we told her how they had recited how *Wäinämöinen* had made himself a *Kantele*

out of the head of a pike, and how he had played upon it so beautifully that the tears had welled to his own eyes until they began to flow, and as his tears fell into the sea the drops turned into beautiful pearls.

We asked the old dame if she could sing?

"Oh yes," and without more ado this prima donna sang a song about a girl sitting at a bridge waiting for her lover. It ran—*Annuka*, the maid of *Åbo*, sat at the end of the bridge waiting for a man after her own mind, a man with tender words. Out of the sea came a man, a watery form out of the depths of the waves with a golden helmet, a golden cloak upon his shoulders, golden gloves upon his hands, golden money in his pockets, and bridal trinkets such as formerly were given to all Finnish brides.

"Will you come with me, *Annuka*, fair maid of *Åbo?*"

"I do not want to, and I will not come," she answers.

Annuka, the maid of *Åbo*, sits at the end of the bridge, and waits for a man after her own mind, a man with tender words.

Out of the sea comes a man, a watery form out of the depths of the waves with a silver helmet, a silver cloak upon his shoulders, silver gloves upon his hands, silver money in his pockets, and silver bridal trinkets.

"Will you come with me, *Annuka*, fair maid of *Åbo?*"

"I do not want to, and I will not come," she answers.

Annuka, the maid of *Åbo*, sits at the end of the bridge, and waits for a man after her own mind, a man with tender words.

Out of the sea comes a man, a watery form out of the depths of the waves with a copper helmet, a copper cloak upon his shoulders, copper gloves upon his hands, copper money in his pockets, and copper bridal trinkets.

"Will you come with me, *Annuka*, fair maid of *Åbo?*"

"I do not want to, and I will not come," she answers.

Annuka, the maid of *Åbo*, sits at the end of the bridge, and waits for a man after her own mind, a man with tender words.

Out of the sea comes a man, a watery form out of the depths of the waves with an iron helmet, an iron cloak upon his shoulders, iron gloves upon his hands, iron money in his pockets, and iron bridal trinkets.

"Will you come with me, *Annuka*, fair maid of *Åbo?*"

"I do not want to, and I will not come," she answers.

And then came a poor man, whose only wealth was bread. It is not gold, nor silver, nor copper, nor iron, but bread that is the staff of life. This is emblematical, to show that money does not make happiness, and so *Annuka*, the maid of *Åbo*, takes him, and sings,

"Now I am coming to you, my husband. *Annuka*, the maid of *Åbo*, will be happy now, and happy evermore."

Many old Finnish songs repeat themselves like this, and most of them are very sad.

Our dear old woman was moved to tears as she sang in her squeaky voice, and rocked herself to and fro.

As she sang a butterfly flew past us, and was quickly joined by a second, when a small fight ensued, the pretty creatures coming together as though kissing one another in their frolicsome short-lived glee, and then separating again, perhaps for ever.

"*Ukkon-koiva*" (butterflies), remarked the old woman, beaming with pleasure. Then our student explained that the butterfly was looked upon as a supreme deity, and its flight considered a good omen.

We had been much impressed by our old dame, her innocence and childish joy, her love of music, and her God-fearing goodness were most touching.

We cannot repeat too often that the Finn is musical and poetical to the core, indeed, he has a strong and romantic love for tales and stories, songs and melody, while riddles are to be met with at every turn, and the funny thing is that these riddles or mental puzzles often most mercilessly ridicule the Finns themselves.

No language, perhaps, is richer in sayings than the Finnish. When a Finn sees any one trying to perform

some feat beyond his power, and failing, he immediately laughs and cries, "*Eihä lehniä punhu puääse*" (the cow cannot climb a hill). Or, when speaking of his own country as superior to every other land, he invariably adds, "*Oma maa mansikka muu maa mustikka*" (my own land is a strawberry, all other lands are bilberries).

These proverbs and riddles, of which there are some thousands, are the solace of the winter evenings, when the old folk sit opposite one another in the dark—more often than not hand in hand—each trying who will give in first and find his store of riddles soonest exhausted. In fact, from childhood the Finn is taught to think and invent by means of riddles; in his solitude he ponders over them, and any man who evolves a good one is a hero in his village. They meet together for "riddle evenings," and most amusing are the punishments given to those who cannot answer three in succession. He is sent to *Hymylä*, which is something like being sent to Coventry!

He is given three chances, and if he can answer none every one sings—

Hyys hyys Hymylään!
Kun et sitäkään tiedä.

Meaning, "Well, well, off you go to Coventry as punishment for ignorance."

Then the poor delinquent is made to play the fool. He is set on a chair in the middle of the room, dressed up as fancy pleases the audience. His face is often absurdly painted, and after enduring every indignity, to the amusement of his friends, he is escorted from the room to ponder over the answers to the riddles. How they chaff him! Does he enjoy *Hymylä?* Are the dogs howling and the children running away? If he wants to come back he had better harness a mouse to his carriage, find a cat to act as coachman, and a saucepan for a sledge. He must wash himself with tar and paint himself with feathers.

And so they chaff and laugh on during those long

winter evenings, in their badly-lighted homes, where books are still rare.

Every one in Finland can read to-day, but the first Finnish book was published in 1542, by *Mikael Agrikola*, the Bishop who made the first translation of the New Testament; but they cannot read much in their dimly-lighted houses during the long winters, and therefore it is they sing so constantly, and repeat mythical rhymes, or riddles and proverbs, which our host and hostess declared they loved.

Their *Savupirtti* and land did not belong to them, the latter told us. The actual owner was a farmer who let it out in various *torps*. Our particular friend, the *torppari*, paid him one-third of all he made off his holding, and gave him besides eight days' work during the year—being called upon for this manual contribution whenever the farmer was himself most pressed.

This particular little chimneyless house lay 18 kilometres from *Iisalmi*, where the nearest shops were to be found. The poor old woman told us that she had had nine children, out of which number she had lost seven. When we considered the smallness of her home, the terrible want of ventilation and sanitation, the poverty of the people, and the hardness of their lives, we were not in the least surprised at her statement, but we marvelled much at the mother having survived all she must have gone through.

She made a wonderful picture as she sat on the wooden bedstead, her bare feet playing a tattoo on the wooden floor, while her clean clothes seemed absolutely to shine against the darkness of the wall behind her.

Although so far removed from civilisation, and from luxuries of any kind, the old couple knew how to read, and they had one or two treasured books. Poor as they were, they, like every other native peasant, possessed a *Piplia* (Bible), a *Katkismus* (prayer-book), a *Vissikirja* (hymn-book), and an *Almanakka* (almanac).

We ventured to ask the good soul if she ever read them,

"Of course," she replied, "or what should we do at the *lukukinkerit?*"

"And what may that be?" we asked, surprised; only to learn that in the winter months the priests travel about by means of sledges from one big peasant's house to another, where the smaller *torpparis* all assemble, and there hold an examination of the people in order to ascertain their holy knowledge.

The peasants rather dread these *lukukinkerit*, as the priest asks them very difficult questions, which it is considered an absolute disgrace not to be able to answer satisfactorily. As we know, this was formerly the custom in Scotland, and very severe punishments were given to those who could not answer rightly, and prove themselves thoroughly versed in Bible history. This custom is now practically done away with in Scotland, although the examination for the communion, which takes place twice a year in the Highlands, partakes somewhat of the same nature. In Finland the winter examinations are very serious matters, and therefore it is that the Bible, prayer-book, and hymn-book are to be found in every peasant's home, while a profound knowledge of their contents is general.

Besides examining the folk on religious subjects, the priest also severely tests their reading capabilities, for no one can be married in Finland unless he be able to read to the satisfaction of his spiritual adviser.

As we turned to leave the little homestead, we noticed some apparently dead birch-trees planted on both sides of the front door, and knowing the birch and ash were still considered sacred by the peasant, we wondered what such a shrubbery could signify—why, when the trees were dead, they had not been thrown away. Everything else looked fresh and green, so we were more than surprised to notice their crumpled brown leaves, and eventually asked how it came about that these two young trees were dead.

"It was my husband's *Nimipäivä* (name-day) lately," said the old body, "and of course we went to the forest and

cut down two birch-trees, and stuck them into the ground by the front door to bring him luck."

The name-day, be it understood, is an important event in Finnish family history. Every person is given at his or her baptism the name of a saint, and on that saint's day of every year, which is called *Nimipäivä* (or name-day), a sort of festival is held equivalent to our birthday rejoicings. For instance, there is a kind of feast, and, if in the case of the father or mother, the children generally all assemble on their parent's name-day. Amongst the higher folk they have a dinner or a dance, or something of that kind—among the poor a feast; but all decorate their front door with birch-trees, a sacred tree with them, in honour of the occasion, while those who have the means to do so exchange presents.

Our dear old lady was almost tearful when we left, and, asking our names most affectionately, tried again and again to pronounce the queer-sounding *Tweedie* and *Harley*. A bright idea struck us; we would show her the words written, and thereupon we gave her our cards. This was too much joy! Fancy any one actually having her name on a card! Then she turned the extraordinary bits of pasteboard over and over, and seizing our hands, kissed them to show her gratitude. Afterwards she went to her cupboard, and producing a white handkerchief, one of those she kept for conveying her Bible to and from church, carefully wrapped the cards round and round, and promised to keep them always in remembrance of her strange visitors.

It was really wonderful, driving along the roads, how near our three *kärra* kept to one another; sometimes, indeed, they were so close that we could all converse conveniently. This answered very well, but when, by chance or design, they got about twenty or thirty yards apart, the dust kicked up by the horse in front was so fearful that we suffered much, and it was really amusing at the end of each day to see how completely our hair was powdered, and note the wonderful gray hue our faces had assumed, eyelashes,

eyebrows and all. I was wearing a black dress, on the lapels of which it afforded amusement to my companions to play a game of *oughts and crosses* with their fingers amid the accumulated dust. It was extraordinary, considering the thickness of the sand, for it was more sand than dust that lay upon the roads, that our ponies could go so well; and when the sun was at its height the heat was so fearful, and the number of mosquitoes and horseflies so appalling, that this inconvenience, coupled with the dust, made it absolutely impossible at times for us to pursue our journey.

The roads themselves were wonderfully straight, and as there is a red post every kilometre (or half mile), we could tell how far we went without even turning our heads, because we could count five or six posts at the same time, so straight was the way.

As we proceeded farther North the country became more hilly, and our little animals would stop and walk up steep inclines; having reached the summit, however, they were wont to gallop full speed to the bottom.

We reached a most charming *majatalo*. It was near midnight, and, as it is one of the best in Finland, it was decided that we should there spend a night. It was only the pretence of a night, however, for the coachman declared it would be quite impossible to drive during the heat of the following day, and, consequently, we must start again on our way at four in the morning at the very latest.

Here at last, thank heaven, we found a *majatalo* which was *properly inspected*. There were iron bedsteads and clean mattresses, and, having suffered so terribly as we had done, it seemed very bad luck that we could not enjoy more than three hours' rest in such delightful quarters. While our supper, which consisted of milk, coffee, eggs, and delicious butter, supplemented with the white bread we brought with us, was being prepared, we had a look into the large farm-house where our host himself lived.

Instead of the family being in bed, as in an ordinary English farm they would be at midnight, a girl was sitting

in the corner making butter with an old-fashioned churn of the wooden-handled type, which you pull up and down to use. There had evidently been a great baking that day or the day before, for the farm kitchen seemed to contain hundreds of loaves, which were stacked on the floor, piled on the table, and strewn on benches, not yet having been suspended by means of strings from the ceilings and rafters.

We thoroughly enjoyed that evening meal, sitting on the balcony, or rather large porch of the little annexe kept for strangers; one and all agreed no nicer butter, sweeter milk, or more perfect cream—of which they brought us a quart jug—could be found anywhere, and that travellers must indeed be hard to please who could not live for a few days on such excellent farm produce, even though they might have to dispense with the luxuries of fish, flesh, and fowl.

Three A.M. is a little early to turn out of bed, but when one is travelling through the wilds one must do many trying things, so we all got up at that hour, which, judging by our feelings, seemed to us still midnight. The sun, however, was of a different opinion, he was up and shining brilliantly long before any of us.

We had previously told our Finnish student the joke of having tried to order hot water over night, and, after much explanation and many struggles to make her understand, how the girl had returned with a teacup full of the boiling liquid, and declared that the greatest trouble we were forced to encounter in Finland was to get any water to wash with, more especially warm.

He smiled, but was not daunted. We heard him up early, and imagined he was arranging things with the coachman and ordering breakfast—for we cannot ever be sufficiently grateful to our Finnish friends for their kindness and thoughtfulness in managing everything for our comfort from the first day of our stay in Finland till the last; but he had done more than this, and apparently made up his mind that we should never, while he travelled with us, have

cause to accuse Finland again of being unable to produce *Hett vatten!*

At 3 A.M. a knock came at the door—a most unusual form of proceeding in a country where every one walks in without this preliminary—and, having opened it in reply, we found a buxom maid standing with an enormous jug of boiling water, and a yet more enormous wooden pail, such as one might require for a family wash, full of the same boiling liquid, and a tub outside the door from which volumes of steam were rising! It was for the English ladies, she said.

Our student had paid us out, and we felt ashamed and sorry.

As we sat at breakfast we watched a girl drawing water from the well. Every house in Finland, be it understood, has its well, over which is a raised wooden platform something like a table with a hole in the middle for the bucket to pass through. A few feet back a solid pillar stands on the ground, through the fork-like top of which a pine-tree trunk is fixed, generally about thirty feet long. It is balanced in such a way that at the one end of it a large stone is tied to make it heavy, while suspended from a fine point, standing in mid-air, appear a series of wooden posts joined together by iron hasps so as to form a long chain or cord, to the bottom end of which the bucket is attached. Thus the bucket with its wooden string is, when filled with water, equivalent in weight to the stone at the other end of the pump. In fact, the whole thing is made on the principle of a pair of scales.

The girl seized the empty bucket, pulled it over the hole, and, hanging on to the jointed poles with all her weight, sent the bucket down some thirty feet into the well below. By this time the stone at the far end of the pole was up in mid-air. When she thought the bucket was full she let go, and immediately it began to rise at the same time as the stone at the other end began to descend, and in a moment the beautiful well-water reached the surface.

Such pumps as these are to be found all over Finland, and their manufacture seems a speciality of the country.

We had considerable fun over the coffee cups at breakfast, for every one of them had written round its border love passages and mottoes in Finnish. Another instance of how the love of proverbs and mottoes is noticeable everywhere throughout the country. Our gentleman friends had great jokes over these inscriptions, but they unkindly refused to tell us what they really meant.

We had learnt a good deal of Finnish from sheer necessity, and could manage to order coffee or milk, or to pay what was necessary, but our knowledge of the language did not go far enough for us to understand the wonderful little tales printed round the coffee cups from which we drank. Again we were given silver spoons.

For once we really started at the hour named, and at four o'clock, with a crack of the whip, our ponies galloped out of the yard of the most delightful *majatalo* we had ever slept in. On we drove through the early hours of the morning, everything looking fresh and bright, the birds singing, the rabbits running across the road. As we passed fields where the peasants were gathering in their hay, or ploughing with an old-fashioned hand-plough, such as was used in Bible days and is still common in Morocco, we wondered what Finnish peasants would think of all our modern inventions for saving labour, especially that wonderful machine where the wheat goes in at the top and comes out corn at one end, chaff in the middle, and straw, bound ready for sale, at the other. We drove on till nine o'clock, by which time we were all ready for another meal. Jogging along country roads aids digestion, and by nine we had forgotten we had ever eaten any breakfast at all. We had really arranged to spend some hours at our next halting-place, in fact not to leave until the cool of the evening, so as to rest both our horses and ourselves, and be saved the glare and the heat. But tired as our animals seemed, and weary though we were, that station proved impossible. We

had to stay for a couple of hours, for it would have been cruel to ask the ponies to leave sooner, but we were indeed thankful that we had not arranged to spend the night in such an awful hole. To relate the horror of that *majatalo* would be too fearful a task. Suffice it to say everything was filthy, and we felt sick at heart when drinking milk and coffee at the place. Worse still, our white bread had come to an end, and we had to eat some of the native rye bread. The housewife and all the women in the place being terrible even to look upon, it seemed perfectly awful to eat bread that they had made, but yet we were so hungry! Reader, pity our plight!

Though the sun was blazing, we dare not sit inside, for the little tufts of hair tied round the legs of the tables a foot and a half from the floor found here practical use. These fur protectors are often used in *Suomi* to keep animals from crawling up the legs of the table, but, in this case, when we bent down to look at the bit of ba-lamb's fur so tied, we saw to our horror that it was full of animal life. Calling the attention of one of our Finnish friends to this fact, he told us that there was a saying that none of these creepy things would come across *filbunke*, and that a friend of his, travelling in these Northern parts, had on one occasion been so pestered that he fetched a wooden mug of *filbunke*, and with a wooden spoon made a ring on the floor with the soured milk, inside which he sat in peace, the crawling things remaining on the outside of his charmed circle.

"And," he added laughing, "we will go and fetch *filbunke*, if you like, and then you can all sit inside rings of your own."

"No," we replied, "instead of doing that, let us get away from here as quickly as possible."

Out we sallied, therefore, to ask the coachman how soon he could be ready to drive on to *Kajana*.

How typical! There was one of the lads, aged thirteen, lying on his back, flat out on the wooden steps of the house, smoking hard at a native pipe; his felt hat was pulled down

HARD STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

over his eyes, his top boots were standing beside him, and over them hung the rags he used for stockings.

"Go on," he said. "Oh! we cannot go on till this afternoon, it's too hot."

"But," remonstrated Grandpapa, "it is not so very far to *Kajana*, and the ladies are anxious to get to the end of their journey."

"Quite impossible," he replied, "the horses must rest."

Wherein he certainly was right; the poor brutes had come well, and, after all, whatever the horrors and inconveniences may be to oneself, one cannot drive dumb animals to death, so, therefore, at that *majatalo* we stayed, weary and hungry prisoners for hours! Only think of it!

Oh, how glad we were to shake the dust of that station from our feet, and how ridiculous it seemed to us that such dirty untidy folk, to whom it seemed as though "Cleanliness is next to godliness" was an unknown fact, could exist in the present day.

We found some amusement, however, for the family had just received in a box-case a sewing-machine—a real English sewing-machine. A "traveller" had been round even to this sequestered spot, possessed of sufficient eloquence to persuade the farmer to buy his goods, and it certainly did seem remarkable that in such a primitive homestead, with its spinning-wheel and hand-loom in one corner, a sewing-machine and a new American clock should stand in the other!

How we jogged; but, be it owned, so many hours' driving and so few hours' rest, in carts without springs or seats and without backs, were beginning to tell, and we were one and all finding our backbones getting very limp. The poor little ponies too began to show signs of fatigue, but luckily we at last reached a hilltop which showed we were drawing close to the end of our *kärra* journey. We pulled up for a while to give the poor creatures time to breathe, and for us to see the wide-spreading forests around. The view extended for miles and miles, and undulating away to the horizon, nothing appeared but pine-trees.

No one can imagine the vastness, the black darkness, the sombre grandness of those pine forests of Finland.

Then the descent began; there were terribly steep little bits, where the one idea of the ponies seemed to be to fly away from the wheels that were tearing along behind them. We held on tightly to the blue knitted reins, for the descents in some places were so severe that even those sure-footed little ponies were inclined to stumble—fatigue was the cause, no doubt;—but if our own descent were exciting, it was yet more alarming to look back at the *kärra* following behind us, literally waggling from side to side in their fast and precipitous descent, encircled by clouds of dust.

Kajana at last! What a promised haven of rest after travelling for days in springless carts, happily through some of the most beautiful parts of Finland.

CHAPTER XVII

TAR-BOATS

We were worn out and weary when we reached *Kajana*, where we were the only visitors in the hotel, and, as the beds very rapidly proved impossible, we women-folk confiscated the large—and I suppose only—sitting-room as our bed-chamber. A horsehair sofa, of a hard old-fashioned type, formed a downy couch for one; the dining-table, covered by one of the travelling rugs, answered as a bed for number two; and the old-fashioned spinet, standing against the wall, furnished sleeping accommodation for number three! We had some compunctions on retiring to rest, because, after our luxurious beds had been *fixed up*, as the Americans would say, we discovered there was no means whatever for fastening the door,—it was, as usual, minus bolts and locks; but as *Kajana* was a very quiet sleepy little town, and no one else was staying in the hotel but our own men-folk on the other side of the courtyard, weary and worn out with our jolty drive, our waterfall bath, etc., we lay down to rest. We were all half asleep when the door suddenly opened and in marched two men. They stood transfixed, for of course it was quite light enough for them to see the strange positions of the occupants of the sitting-room; and the sight scared them even more than it did us, for they turned and fled! We could not help laughing, and wondering what strange tales of our eccentricities would enliven the town that night.

Descending the rapids of the *Uleåborg* river in a tar-

boat is one of the most exciting experiences imaginable. Ice-boat sailing in Holland, *skilöbnung* (snow-shoeing) in Norway, horse-riding in Morocco—all have their charms and their dangers—but, even to an old traveller, a tar-boat and a cataract prove new-found joys. There is a vast district in Finland, about 65° North latitude, extending from the frontier of Russia right across to *Uledborg* on the Gulf of Bothnia, where tar plays a very important rôle; so important, in fact, that this large stretch of land, as big or bigger than Wales, is practically given over to its manufacture and transport.

After leaving *Kuopio*, as we had travelled Northwards towards Lapland, the aspect of the country altered every twenty miles. It became far more hilly, for Finland, as a whole, is flat. The vegetation had changed likewise, and we suddenly found ourselves among tracts of dwarf birch so familiar to travellers in Iceland.

As we had driven on towards *Kajana*, we had repeatedly passed pine-trees from which part of the bark was cut away, and, not realising we were now in *tar-land*, wondered at such destruction.

The history of the tar, with which we are so familiar, is very strange, and not unmixed with dangers. Pine-trees, growing in great forests where the bear, wolf, and elk are not unknown, are chosen for its production. The first year the bark is carefully cut away from the ground as high as a man can reach, except on the northern side of the tree, where a strip two inches wide is left intact. Now this strip is always the strongest part of the bark because it faces northwards, and it is, therefore, left to keep the tree alive and to prevent it from drying. All the rest of the trunk remains bare, shining white and silvery in the sunlight, and forms a thick yellow juice, which oozes out of the tree, and smells strongly of turpentine. This ultimately makes the tar.

Next year the same process is repeated, except that then the bark is peeled higher up the tree, the strip on the

northern side always being left as before to keep the sap alive. This treatment goes on for four, and sometimes five, years, until most of the tree is stripped. It was in this naked condition the pines first attracted our attention, for a barkless tree covered with a thick yellow sap, to the uninitiated is an unusual sight. In October, or early in November, of each year the selected pines are duly cut down, and later, by the aid of sledges, they are dragged over the snow through the forests to the nearest *tervahauta* (kiln), there to be burnt into tar.

So cold is it in this part of the world during winter that the thermometer often drops to 30° or 40° Fahr. below freezing-point, and then the hard-worked little horses look like balls of snow, the heat from their bodies forming drops at the end of their manes, tails, and even their long coats, for their hair grows to an even greater length than the Shetland ponies, till at last their coats become so stiff they are not able to move, so they often have to be taken indoors and thawed by the oven's friendly warmth.

These sturdy little beasts gallop over the hardened forest track, dragging their wood behind them—for without the aid of snow to level the roads, or ice to enable the peasants to make short cuts across the lakes, little trade could be done. The winter comes as a boon and a blessing to man in those Northern realms; all transport is performed by its aid, sledges travel over snow more easily than wheels over roadless ways, and *sukset* or skates traverse snow or ice more rapidly than the ordinary summer pedestrian.

Suffocated with heat and dust, we were ourselves bumping along in a springless *kärra*, when our attention was first arrested by—what? let us say a huge basin built on piles. This was a *tervahauta* or tar-kiln, which looked like an enormous mushroom turned upside down, standing on a thick stem of wooden piles, only in this case the mushroom was 90 or 100 feet in circumference, and the stem at least 15 feet wide.

As we have nothing at all like it in England, it is

difficult to describe its appearance. Think of a flattened basin or soup-plate made of pine-trees and covered over with cement, so that an enormous fire may burn for days upon it. In the middle, which slopes downwards like a wine funnel, is a hole for the tar to run through into a wooden pipe, which carries it to the base of the kiln; passing along to the outside, the wooden pipe is arranged in such a way that a barrel can be put at the end to receive the tar. This vast basin has to be very solidly built in order to withstand the weight of wood—sometimes over a hundred trees at a time—and also the ravages of fire, therefore it is securely fastened and supported at the edges by whole trunks of trees bound together with cement. Once built, however, it lasts for years, and, therefore, most tar-farmers have a *tervahauta* of their own.

The felled timber, having been sawn into pieces about a yard long in order that they may be conveniently packed on the sledges, arrive at the kiln before spring, so that by June all is ready for the actual manufacture of the tar itself. The *tervahauta* basin is then packed as full as it is possible to stack the wood, which is always laid round the middle in order to leave a hole in the centre free to receive the tar. By the time the mass is ready it looks like a small hillock, and is made even more so in appearance by being thickly covered over with turf, that it may be quite air-tight, and that a sort of dry distillation may go on. Fires are then lighted at different points round the edge, to the end that the interior may catch fire, the process being aided by a train of old tar which runs from the burning point to the centre, as dynamite is laid prior to an explosion. By this means the whole huge bonfire shortly begins to smoulder.

The fire burns for ten days and nights, during which time it is never left, a man always staying beside the *tervahauta* to see no accident disastrous to the tar happens. As the heat inside increases, the tar gradually begins to drop through the wooden pipe into barrels below, and from

sixty to two hundred of them may be extracted from one kiln load. Needless to say, one man cannot move the filled barrel and replace it with an empty one, so, whenever such a change becomes necessary, by means of a shrill whistle he summons a companion to his aid; at other times he sits alone and watches for hours together the smouldering flames.

Making the barrels is another Finnish trade, and the peasants, who manufacture them in winter, get from eightpence to tenpence each, for they have to be very strong. It is, indeed, much more difficult to make a tar-barrel than a water-cask.

Here ingenuity has to come to the peasant's aid; each barrel, when filled, weighs about 400 lbs., and has to be conveyed from the forest country to the nearest waterway or town. Finns rise to the occasion, however. They take thick pieces of wood, on to which a kind of axle is securely attached, and adjusting them by means of very ingenious pegs fixed at both ends of the barrel, where the side pieces of wood project beyond the actual top and bottom, the cask itself practically becomes its own wheels. Wooden shafts are fixed from the axle to the horse's collar, and though, with his queer load, the little ponies are not beauties to look at, they are marvels to go, trotting along over tree trunks and stony boulders to the nearest waterway, the barrels following—carriage and wheels in one.

After many vicissitudes this tar arrives at the end of its land journey—but if that be on the frontier of Russia, it may still have 250 miles of river, lake, and rapid to traverse before it reaches *Uleåborg*, where it is transhipped to England, America, and Germany.

It had been arranged that we were to descend the wonderful rapids from *Kajana* to *Uleåborg*, a day and a half's journey; but we wanted to taste something of the ascent as well,—there is no *down* without an *up*, and we thought we should like to try both. The tar-boats that go down the *Oulunjoki* river, heavily laden with their wares, in from two

or three days, have to come up again empty; this is the heaviest and most tiring part of the whole performance to the boatmen, and cannot be accomplished under two or three weeks. They sometimes bring back 500 or 600 lbs. of salt or flour, for although they take down twenty-five or thirty times as much as this in weight, they cannot manage more on the return journey, when, to lighten the boat as much as possible, they even take off the top planks or bulwarks and leave them behind at *Uledborg*, putting new bulwarks a foot broad made of half-inch plank before the next downward voyage.

A tar-boat is a very peculiar craft, and, when one sees it for the first time, it seems impossible that anything so fragile can travel over 200 miles by river, rapid, lake, and cataract. The boats are generally from 35 to 45 feet long, but never more than 4 feet wide, or they could not be steered between the rocks of the swirling cataracts. They are pointed at both ends like a gondola, but it is not the narrowness and length that strike terror into the heart of a stranger, but rather the thinness of the wood of which they are built. The boat is made of the planks of well-grown trees, which planks, though over a foot wide, are sawn down to three-quarters of an inch thick, so that in the strongest part only three-quarters of an inch divides passengers and crew from the water, that water being full of rocks and whirlpools! Four planks a foot wide and three-quarters of an inch thick, as a rule, make the sides of a tar-boat, not nailed, be it understood, but *tied* together with pieces of thin birch twig! Holes are bored, the birch threaded through, securely fastened, and then, to make the whole thing water-tight, the seams are well caulked with tar. This simple tying process gives the craft great flexibility, and if she graze a rock, or be buffeted by an extra heavy wave, she bends instead of breaking.

From all this it will be inferred the boat is very light, or it could never be got home again—but when twenty-four or twenty-eight barrels, each weighing four to five hundred

pounds, are in it, the water comes right up to the very gunwale, so an extra planking of a foot wide is tied on in the manner aforementioned, to keep the waves out, and that planking is only half an inch thick. Therefore the barrels are only divided from the seething water by three-quarters of an inch, and the waves kept back by even a slighter barrier.

When the last boats go down in October, ice has already begun to form, and they frequently suffer very much from its sharp edges, for which reason the perils of those late journeys are often hideous. When the tar-barrels reach *Kajana* from the forests they are only worth from 12 to 18 marks (shillings) each, and when one considers the labour entailed to get them there, it seems remarkable that any profit can be made out of such a trade. Very cleverly the heavy tubs are lifted by a crane into the boat—just wide enough to take them in twos and twos lengthwise—three or four perhaps being placed on the top of all. The biggest cargo consists of twenty-eight barrels. Before the tubs are really shipped they are tested, as wine is tested, to see that the quality is all right, and that they are worth the perilous carriage. So many of these boats ply backwards and forwards during July, August, September, and October, that sometimes as many as a hundred will pass *Kajana* in one day. This gives some idea of the industry and its enormous importance to that vast tract of country. Indeed, from 50,000 to 70,000 barrels find their way down the *Uleåborg* river alone during these months.

Owing to the courtesy of *Herr Fabrikor Herman Renfors*, to whom the Governor of the Province had kindly given us an introduction, we went a mile and a half up the rapids and through a couple of locks in his private tar-boat, just for the experience. The heat being tropical, we did not start till 6 P.M., when we found *Herr Renfors* waiting at the entrance to the first lock, as arranged, in a real tar-boat, which he was steering himself, for, being an enthusiastic fisherman, he goes out alone for days at a time, and can steer up or down the rapids as well as any pilot. No one

who has not seen a rapid can realise the nerve this requires. Seats had been roughly put in for us to sit on, otherwise, as a rule, except for the oarsmen's bench and the barrels, these boats are absolutely empty. Our friend, the steersman, sat at the bow, and with a sort of oar, held in position by a rope of plaited straw fixed a little on one side, guided the fragile bark. First we had to go into a lock. Any one acquainted with a nice wide shallow Thames lock may think he knows all about such matters; but in reality he does nothing of the kind. For this Finnish lock, and there are two of them close together, is very long, forty-five feet being required for the boat alone, and nearly as much for the rush of water at the end to prevent that single boat being swamped. As the rise of water is over twenty feet, the lock is some forty feet deep and only six or seven feet wide. The walls are tarred black, and, although the sun blazed outside, when we entered this long narrow vault the air struck chill and cold, and it was so dark and weird that it seemed like going into an underground cellar. As those massive wooden doors closed behind us, we felt as though we were about to be buried alive in a well, or were enacting some gruesome scene fitted for Dante's wondrous pen when dipped in ink of horror. The gates slammed. The chains grated. The two oarsmen steadied the boat by means of poles which they held against the sides of those dark walls, the steersman with another pole kept her off the newly shut massive wooden door—and then—oh! we gasped, as a volume of water over ten feet descended a little in front of us, absolutely soaking the oarsmen, and showering spray over every one.

It was a wonderful sensation; we were walled in, we were deep in the lock, and as the water poured down in two falls, for there was a platform half way to break its tremendous force, our boat bobbed up and down like a cockle-shell. We felt an upset meant death, for no one could possibly have climbed up those steep black walls, still less swum or even kept his head above such volumes of water.

Up, up, up, we went until we had risen over twenty feet, which dwindled to nothing when the door opened at the end of the waterfall and we glided out into the world of sunshine, to see our friend the old castle before us again, the pine-trees on the banks, and the funny little wooden town on our right. Verily a transformation scene—a return to life—after water and darkness.

Before us was a small rapid, and, having rowed up under the lea of the land, it was perfectly marvellous to see how the boat was suddenly turned right across the bubbling water, and steered like a gliding eel in and out of waves and spray to the other side, which we reached by means of hard pulling, without losing more than thirty or forty feet by the strong current. Here came another lock, and over three minutes were again spent in rising another twenty feet, before we were at a level to continue our course. Then came a stretch which could be rowed, although, of course, the stream was always against us; but two stalwart Finns sitting side by side pulled well, and on we sped until the next rapid was reached, when out we all had to bundle, and the fragile craft had to be towed, as the strength of the water made it impossible to row against it. There was a path of rocky boulders, uneven and somewhat primitive, such a towing path being always found beside the rapids, as the oarsmen have to get out and tow at all such places. Therefore, when returning home from *Uleåborg*, the sailors have to row either against the stream (one long tract, however, being across a lake where it is possible to sail), or else they have to walk and pull. No wonder it takes them three weeks to make the voyage!

Having landed us, the two oarsmen pulled with a rope, but as the boat would have been torn to pieces on the rocks beside the bubbling water, the steersman had to keep her off by means of a long pole; and very hard work he evidently found it, bending the whole weight of his body in the process, straining every nerve at times. It is terrific exertion to get even such a light thing as a tar-boat over

such places, and in a mile and a half we had to get out four times as well as pass through the two locks (there are but four on the whole river), and we only reached the pilot station after one and a half hours' work, which gave us a good idea of the weariness of toiling up stream, and the wonders of coming down, for we retraced the same route in fourteen minutes!

We crossed the famous rapid described in *Kalevala* as where one of the heroes went swirling round and round, we watched women steering with marvellous agility and skill, and there, on the bank, we saw a stalwart Finn, with an artistic pink shirt, awaiting our arrival to pilot us down again, our host preferring to employ a pilot for the descent when he had any one on board besides himself.

The pilot was a splendidly made young fellow of twenty-four; a very picture, with his tan trousers, and long brown leather boots doubled back under the knee like a brigand, but ready to pull up to the thigh when necessary. On his felt cap he wore a silver badge with the letters L.M. clearly stamped. "What do they mean?" we asked.

"L.M. is an abbreviation for *laskumies* or pilot—it means that he is a certified pilot for this stream," replied *Herr Renfors*, "and as there are ladies here I am going to get him to take the boat down—ladies are such a responsibility," he laughed, "I dare not undertake the task."

We soon entered into conversation with this picturesque Finn, and found his father was also a *laskumies*, and that as a boy he always went with him, steering the boat down when he was fourteen, although he did not get his badge till he was eighteen years of age. As soon as he got it he married, and now had two children. These pilots only receive their badges after careful examination from the government, and, the pay being good, while the position is considered a post of honour, they are eagerly-sought-for appointments.

"How wildly exciting it is," we exclaimed, as we whirled round corners, waves dashing into our boat only to be baled out with a sort of wooden spoon.

"I make this little journey sometimes twenty times in a day," he replied; "but I can't say I find it very entertaining."

We simply gasped sometimes—especially when nearing *Kajana*, and we knew we had to go under the bridge before us, the youth steering apparently straight for the rocks on the shore. Destruction seemed imminent, the water was tearing along under the bridge at an awful rate, but he still held on for the rocks; we held our breath—till, at the eleventh and three-quarterth hour, so to speak, the pink-shirted Finn twisted his steering pole, and under the bridge we shot, and away out at the other side quite safely.

We breathed again!

Pilots are only necessary for the rapids, and they receive one mark for the shorter and two marks for the longer stretches, one of which is thirteen miles in length, so that a boat between *Kajana* and *Uleåborg* has to pay ten marks for its pilots, which they are bound by law to carry. On some of the stretches there are as many as twenty-four pilots to each rapid.

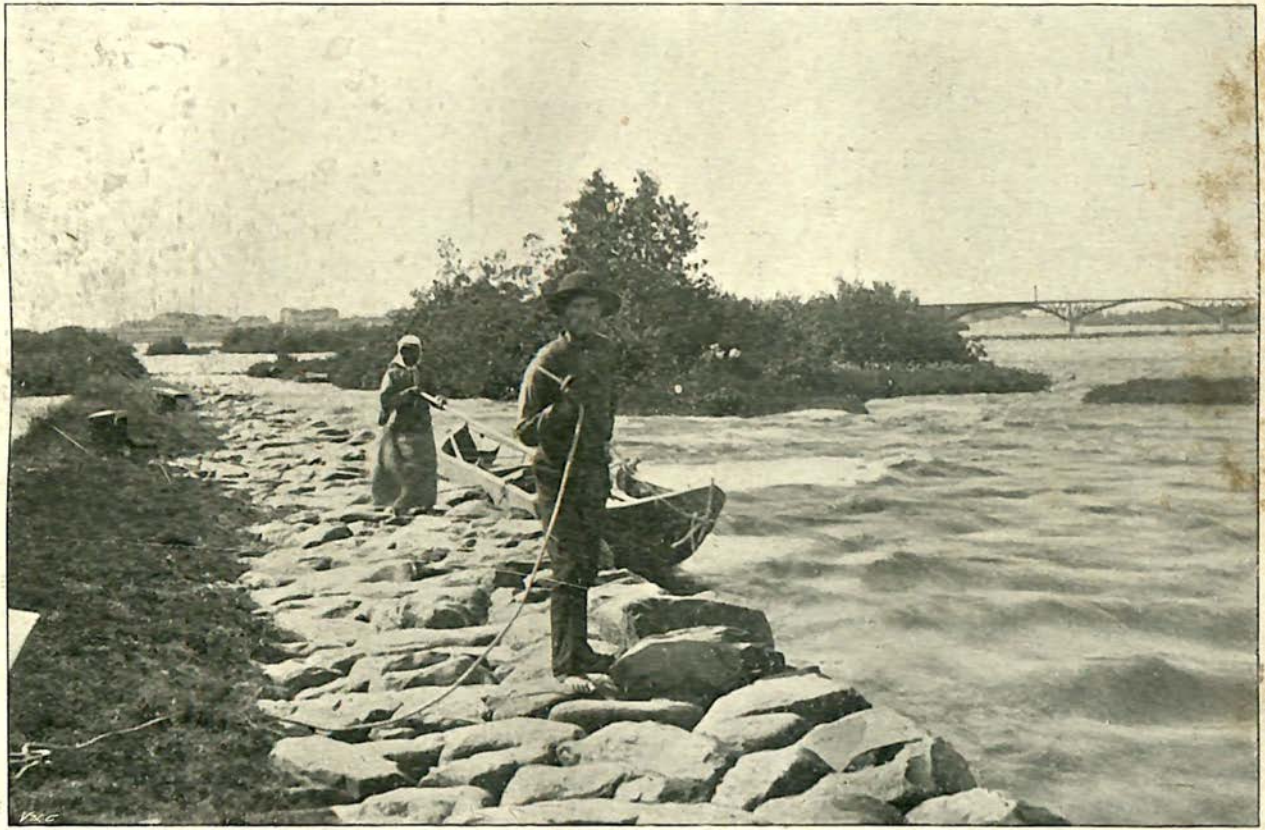
Our experience of a tar-boat but whetted our appetite, and we looked forward, all pleasurable anticipation, to our descent to the coast.

The next morning at 7 A.M. we left *Kajana* in a very small steamboat to cross the great *Oulujärni* lake, and arrived about twelve at *Waala*, where our own tar-boat was awaiting us. We were struck, as we passed over the lake, to see a veritable flower-garden upon the surface of the water. The lake is so wide that at times we quite lost sight of one shore; yet these small flowers, something like primroses, only white, with their floating roots, were everywhere, looking almost like snow upon the water! We passed boats sailing down with tar, the wind being with them, and we passed empty boats rowing up. They never go home the entire way under three weeks, and even coming down the rapids, if the wind is against them, they may take several days to reach *Uleåborg*. Whereas, with

wind to help them across the lake, they can go down laden in a little over two days all the way from Russia. Once started on the downward route they seldom rest until their journey is completed, for it is very important for each boat to do three voyages from Russia during the season, if possible, and more of course from shorter distances.

We were horrified to find that a large number of women and children were employed on the water. Rowing or towing such heavy boats is a very serious matter; and to see a couple of women, or a woman and a child, doing the work, the husband, brother, or other male relative steering where no pilot is necessary, made us feel sick at heart. Such work is not fit for them, and in the case of young girls and boys must surely be most injurious. When returning home the poor creatures often pull their boat out of the water and, turning her on one side, spend the night under her sheltering cover.

The tar-boats ply a dangerous trade; but our own experiences must be described in another chapter.



A STONY PATH TO RUSSIA

CHAPTER XVIII

DESCENDING THE RAPIDS

FROM *Kajana* to *Uleåborg* one travels down the splendid *Oulu* river and across the *Oulujärni* lake, joining the river again on the other side of *Waala*. The journey is perfectly wonderful, but should only be undertaken by people blessed with strong nerves and possessed of iron constitutions. In our case it took twenty-nine hours without sleep, for we left *Kajana* at 7 A.M. on Thursday morning, and only reached *Uleåborg* at midday on Friday.

That was indeed an experience, in more ways than one. The first hours we spent in a small steamer, too small to carry a restaurant, so, let it be understood at once, provisions must be taken for the whole journey, unless the traveller wishes starvation to be added to his other hardships.

The *Oulujärni* lake is a terror to the tar-boats, for it is one of the largest lakes in Finland, and when there is a storm the fragile tar-boat is forced to hug the land for safety, or draw up altogether and lie-to until the storm has spent itself. Many of these small craft have been taken unawares when out in the middle of the lake, and come to signal grief accordingly. Then again, in times of dead calm, the heavily-laden boat does not even have the benefit of the quickly-running water to bear her on her way, and the three occupants of the vessel have to row the entire distance, for the steersman, no longer requiring to guide her with his enormous pole, ships it and rows at the side with

one oar,—with it at the same time he guides. These steering poles are really remarkable; they are about twelve or fifteen feet long, and are simply a solid trunk of a pine tree as wide as a man's hand can grasp at the thinnest end, broadening out, and trimmed in such a way that they form a kind of flat solid paddle at the other end. The weight of these poles is overpowering, even when slipped through the ring of plaited tree branches which keep them in place, and make them easier to hold securely. When the cataracts are reached, even these strong poles shiver with the force of the water, and the steersman has all his work to do to combat the rushing waters; his whole bodily weight must be brought to bear in order to fight those waves and steer his craft safely through them. No praise we can give is too high for the skill of the pilots of the rapids, no admiration too great, for it is to that and his physical strength, to his power and calmness, to his dexterity and boundless knowledge of hidden dangers and unexpected horrors, that the safety of our lives is due, and, when we peeped occasionally at our steersman as we flew over the great rapid, where for over an hour every nerve, every fibre of his body was strung to agonising pitch, we looked and wondered. His eyes were fixed steadfastly before him, and as he flung all the weight of his body on to his pole, the whole boat trembled, but in a second obeyed his bidding and twisted whither he wished. Second, did we say? half-second, quarter-second, would be more accurate, for the bow of the boat was guided at giddy speed to within a few feet of a rock, and just as she was about to touch, twisted off again for us to ride over some crested wave, or fly down some channel which just cleared the death-trap.

By such means we zig-zagged from side to side of the river, which at the cataracts is generally nearly a quarter of a mile broad, and in the calmer stretches widens out to half a mile and more. But we are anticipating.

We arrived at *Waala*—a cluster of small houses—about 11.30, and, landing from our little steamer, found that,

although our tar-boat had been ordered and everything was ready owing to the kindness of the inspector of the district, who himself came to see us off, we could not get really under weigh before one o'clock. All the luggage had to be packed into the boat,—not much luggage, be it said, for, beyond the reach of the railways, one Gladstone bag per person is all that is possible (less is preferable), as that can go into one of the little *kärra* (carts), or can be carried by a peasant when necessary. Travelling through the interior and Northern parts of Finland is roughing it indeed, and when it comes to being away from the post-stations (for carriages and horses), which are generally fairly good, and sleeping in a real peasant's house, then one realises what it means to sit on a hard wooden chair all night for safety's sake.

At last we were, all six, for this number composed our party, seated, some on Gladstones, some on an enormous rug case, some on nothing, or something equally uncomfortable, but all of us as low down as possible, such being the inspector's orders, as our weight steadied the boat, and, being below the water's level, kept us from getting wet from the spray, although we found, by experience, it did not prevent our shipping whole seas, and getting thoroughly soaked.

"The wind is against you," remarked the inspector, "which is a pity, as it will occupy much longer time, and you will get more wet, but by 3 A.M. (fourteen hours) you ought to reach *Muhos*, where you can snatch a few hours' sleep before going on in the little steamer that will take you down the last stretch of the river to *Uleåborg*."

It was bad enough, in theory, to sit fourteen hours within the cramped precincts of a tar-boat, but it was nothing to what in practice we really endured. However, we luckily cannot foresee the future, and with light hearts, under a blazing sun, we started, a man at the stern to steer, a woman and a boy in the bow to row, and ourselves and our goods securely stowed away—packed almost as closely as herrings in a barrel.

Directly after leaving *Waala*, within a few minutes in fact, we came to the *Nis Kakoski* rapid. Six miles at flying speed; six miles tearing over huge waves at break-neck pace; six miles with a new experience every second; six miles feeling that every turn, every moment must be our last!

No one could dream of the excitements of speeding six miles, turning here and twisting there between rocks or piled-up walls of stone, absolutely seeing and feeling the drop of the water, as one bounded over the fall—such an experience cannot be described. As those massive waves struck the boat, and threw volumes of water into our laps, we felt inclined to shriek at the speed at which we were flying. Wildly we were tearing past the banks, when, lo! —what was that? A broken tar-boat; a mere scattered mass of wooden beams, which only a few hours before was a boat like our own!

In spite of the marvellous dexterity of the pilots, accidents happen sometimes; and that very morning, the wind being strongly against the boats descending, a steersman venturing a little too near a hidden rock, his frail craft was instantly shattered to pieces. The tar-barrels, bubbling over the water like Indian corn over a fire, were picked up many miles below; but, as the accident happened near the water's edge, the crew were luckily saved.

That journey was a marvellous experience; one of the most exciting and interesting of the writer's life; not only did it represent a wonderful force of nature, but an example of what skill and a cool head can do; for what man without both could steer a boat through such rapids —such cataracts? At times the waves looked as if they were returning upon us, yet in reality we were going with the stream, but the rocks below made them curl back again.

Along the stream several crews were toiling and straining at their towing ropes to get their empty boats to *Kajana*. Oh, what work in that heat! No wonder they

all dreaded that return journey. Toiling along the bank were the wretched men and women making their way back towards Russia. The strangely uneven stone wall along which they pulled their tar-boat looked as if it would cut their poor bare feet to pieces. Two generally tugged at the rope, a third keeping the boat off the wall by means of a long pole; and for a fortnight or three weeks they tugged and pulled their empty boat, or in calmer stretches sailed or rowed back the route we were now flying along at lightning speed.

Then came two hours of calm rowing along a beautiful stretch of river, where rocks and pine-trees rose straight from the water's edge, and queer little gray houses denoted peasants' homesteads, peeping out among the almost yellow rye-fields, or the newly gathered hay crops. Small black and white curly sheep gamboled in the meadows—those very sheep whose coats are so famous as *Kajana Lambs*, rivalling even Russian Astrakhan.

Imagine a fall of 200 feet in a thin fragile boat; yet such is possible at *Pyhakoski*, another of the rapids, during a stretch of cataract about thirteen miles long—as an average, these wondrous falls are about a quarter of a mile broad, sometimes more, sometimes less. They are indeed most truly wonderful.

It was a perfectly beautiful evening as we neared *Pyhakoski*. The wind had fallen, and when, after passing a rapid, we drew up by the bank to enjoy our evening meal, the sun at 9.30 was just beginning to set. We had left *Waala* at 1.30, and been travelling all the time, so were beginning to feel the pleasant pangs of hunger. With a pine wood behind us, where bilberries, just ripening among the ferns, covered the ground, we six friends — four Finlanders and two English—made a very happy party. We cooked our tea by the aid of a spirit-lamp, ate hard-boiled eggs, and some most delicious cold trout, devoured whole loaves of white bread and butter, and were feeling as happy as possible—when suddenly the glorious golden orb,

shining through the skies of evening, was reflected in flaming colour nearer home, for, lo! the lamp in the tea-basket exploded with a terrific bang, which brought us all to our feet in an instant. Here was a calamity to occur on such a dry night, and in a pine forest, too, where, if the trees once ignited, flames might spread for miles and miles, causing incalculable damage. We all knew the danger, and each prepared to assist in putting out the fire. Grandpapa, with the agility of a cat, seized the burning basket and threw it and its contents bodily into the river—great was the frizzle as it touched the water, and greater the noise as plates and spoons clattered into the stream. Poor man, he was wet to his knees standing in the water, and he looked almost as if he had been taking a mud bath by the time he succeeded in rescuing our crockery and plate. But, undoubtedly, he prevented much serious damage of valuable property by his prompt action. Our tea was lost, and our delightful basket, that had travelled in many lands, destroyed. It had never failed before—but we afterwards unravelled the mystery. The *Apothek*, whom we asked to supply us with some methylated spirit, not understanding our request, had substituted something which did not suit the lamp.

"All's well that ends well," however, so we will say no more about his mistake, save that we lost our second cup of tea.

Never, never did any one behold more wonderful reflections than were to be seen that night on the *Uled* river. As the empty boats passed up a quiet reach sufficiently shallow to permit of punting, the reflections of the coloured shirts and poles, of the old brown boats and the cheery faces on board, were as distinct in the water as the things themselves. Every blade of grass found its double in that mirror-like stream, every rock appeared darker and larger below than it did above the water; but our admiration was distracted by mosquitoes,—when we drew up at a small *torp* to take up a fresh pilot, who was to steer us safely over the famous *Pyhakoski* rapids. By this time it was 10.30, and

the sun just above the pine tops, which seemed striving to soar high enough to warm themselves in its glorious rich colourings, and we feared it might be too late to attempt such a dangerous passage, but half a dozen pilots assembled on the bank—their day's work being over—declared it was perfectly safe, as safe at least as it ever can be, therefore, after shipping our man, away we rowed—the river having broadened again to three-quarters of a mile, so that it looked like a lake.

A small child offered us a little wooden tub of luscious yellow berries, *suomuurain* (Finnish), *Hjörtron* (Swedish), for a mark—the same would have cost about eight marks at *Helsingfors*—which we gladly bought and ate as we drifted along. Those delicious Northern delicacies, with a taste of the pine-tree, greatly refreshed us. We had made up our minds early in the day, that as we could not take more than four or five hours' rest, to sleep on the bank, and make a large fire to keep away the mosquitoes. The weather was all that could be wished, indeed, the heat of the day had been so great we had all sat with white pocket-handkerchiefs hanging from under our hats and down our necks to keep off the blazing sun, no parasols being possible when correct steering meant life or death. In fact, we had decided to manage the best sort of "camp out" we could with a coat each and a couple of Scotch plaid rugs among us all. The prospect seemed more pleasant than a one or two-roomed *torp* shared with the *torppari's* family; for we had suffered so much in strange beds already, and had woefully regretted many times not having brought hammocks, which we might have slung out of doors on these splendid June and July nights, and slept in peace under the daylight canopy of heaven. Accordingly, a camp on the bank had been voted and passed by unanimous acclamation.

No artist's brush could reproduce such a scene. In the foreground a roaring seething mass of water denoted strength and power, beyond lay a strange hazy mist, like a soft gauze film, rising in the sudden chill of evening from

the warmed water, and the whole landscape was rendered more weird and unreal in places by the wild white spray which ascended, as the waves lapped some hidden or visible rock lying right across our course. Farther on, the river was bordered by pine and fir-trees, through the stems of which the departing sun shone, glinting here and there upon the bark; the warm shades of the sky dappled with red and yellow, painted by a Mighty Hand, were well in keeping with the "Holy Stream," as this rapid is called by the peasants living along its shores.

A mystic scene of wondrous beauty; more and more the vapours rose, until a great soft barrier seemed erected before us, almost as high as the trees; dense at their roots, tapering away to indistinctness at their tops, where the sunset glow lay warm and bright upon their prickly branches.

It reminded one of glorious evenings in Switzerland, where snow-clad peaks soar above the clouds, their majestic heads rising as it were from nothingness. That night on the *Ulea* river, this strong, strange, misty fog was very remarkable—such a contrast to the intense heat of the day, so extraordinary after the marvellous clearness which had preceded it, so mystic after the photographic distinctness of a few hours before.

A shriek from our steersman, and we found we were flying madly towards a sort of wooden pier; we held our breath, it seemed so close. In the mist we were almost upon it before we saw our danger; but when the pilot shouted, the oarsmen instantly shipped. Even when going through the rapids it should be explained that two men in the bows keep rowing continuously to help to steady the boat; but on the occasion in question, just when the agony point was reached, they lifted their oars, and we swung round a corner—not to sudden death as we fully expected, but into a comparatively calm stretch of water; where, lo! we found before us a white bank. It was vapour, mist, fog, what you will; but a cold evening, after a day of intense

heat, had clothed the river in thick white clouds, impenetrable to the sight, cold, clammy, terrifying to a stranger.

"It is impossible," exclaimed the oarsman to our Finnish-speaking friends; "I thought I could get you to *Muhos* to-night, but until that fog lifts we can go no farther, it is not safe."

Here was a prospect. We had been eleven hours in the boat, for it was now midnight. We had been grilled like salmon with the heat, and now we were perished with wet from the wash of the waves, and cold from the damp chill air. We could not lie on the ground—no fire would ignite amid soaking grass, what was to become of us we did not know.

We wanted experiences, and we had got them, more than we bargained for. Who could have imagined such a day would turn to such a night? Who indeed!

We all looked at each other, we all sighed. One suggested sitting as we were all bolt upright, with the boat moored to some bank—others thought a walk might prove an agreeable change — the wisest held their tongues, thought much, and said little.

We were in the middle of the stream, when, without a word of explanation, our steersman suddenly turned the bow of our frail bark right across the water, and with one rush her nose hit the bank; our speed was so great that we were all shaken from our seats, as the boat bounded off again, but he was an old experienced hand, and, by some wondrous gymnastic feat, he got her side sufficiently near the bank for our boy, with a rope in his hand, to spring upon *terra firma* and hold us fast, without shattering our bark completely to pieces with the force of our sudden arrival.

"Is this fog usual?" we asked the pilot.

"No, very unusual, only after such intense heat as we have had to-day. If I had not landed you at this spot another yard would have made doing so impossible, for this is the *Pyhakoski* rapid, the most dangerous of all, and thirteen miles long!"

What an experience! Hungry, tired, miserable, cold, to be suddenly turned, whether we wished it or not, out of our only refuge and home.

"Close by here," he continued, "is a peasant's house—you must go there for some hours."

We looked; but the fog was so thick we could see nothing, therefore, without a word of remonstrance, we followed our pilot, plodding through grass soaked in moisture which reached to our knees, feeling very cold, wet, and tired, but all trying to keep stout hearts and turn cheery faces to misfortune.

Yes, there—as if sent as a blessing from heaven—we saw a little house peeping through the fog.

We went to the door; we knocked, we knocked again. No answer. We shook the door; it was locked. We called; no one replied. We walked round the house and tried the windows—all closed, securely closed. We knocked and called louder than before. Still no answer.

What disappointment! The house was deserted. On the very eve of shelter we were baffled. Was it not enough to fill our hearts with despair? We could not go back, for we had nowhere to go; we could not sit on the bank, for that fog brooded evil. Some one suggested bursting open the door, for shelter we must have, and began rattling away with that purpose, when, lo! a voice, an awful voice called "*Hulloa!*"

"It is haunted," exclaimed some one; "it is a ghost, or a spirit or something. Do let us go away—what a horrible place."

"It is a phantom house," cried another, "this is not real—come, come—come away."

But the voice again called "*Hulloa!*"

The sound seemed nearer, and looking round we saw a white apparition standing in a darkened doorway on the other side of the garden, a figure clad in white approached through the mist; it was very ghostly. Was it hallucination, the result of exhausted minds and bodies, weak from

want of food, and perished with wet and cold, or was it—yes, it *was*—a man.

We could have hugged that delightful Finn, our joy was so great at his appearance, key in hand ready to open the door. He did so; a delicious hot air rushed upon us—it seemed like entering a Turkish bath, but when a second door was opened the heat became even more intense, for the kitchen fire was still alight, and, as if sent as an extra blessing from above, the coffee-pot was actually on the hob, filled and ready for the peasants' early morning meal. Could anything be more providential—warmth and succour—food, beds, and comfort!

Like savages we rushed upon the coffee-pot, blew the dying embers into flame, took off our soaking shoes and stockings and placed them beside the oven, pattering barefoot over the boards; we boiled milk, which was standing near, and drank the warming, soothing beverage.

All this took time, and, while the others worked, the writer made the accompanying hurried sketch (see *Frontispiece*) by the daylight of midnight at the "Haven of Refuge," as we christened our new abode.

The kitchen, or general living-room, was, as will be seen by the sketch, typically Finnish. The large oven stood on one side furnished with the usual stone stairs, up which the family clamber in the winter months, in order that they may sleep on the top of the fireplace, and thus secure warmth during the night.

On the other side we noticed a hand-loom with linen in it, which the good housewife was weaving for her family. Before it was a wooden tub, wherein flour for making brown bread was standing ready to be mixed on the morrow; in front of it was a large wooden mortar, cut out of a solid tree trunk.

The light was dim, for it was midnight, and, although perfectly clear outside, the windows of the little gray house were so few and so small that but little light could gain admittance.

This but added to the weirdness of the scene. It all seemed unreal—the dim glow from the spluttering wood, freshly put on, the beautiful shining copper coffee-pot, the dark obscurity on the top of the oven. The low ceiling with its massive wooden beams, the table spread for the early breakfast—or maybe the remnants of the evening meal—with a beer-hen full of *Kalja*, a pot, rudely carved, filled with *piimeä* or soured milk, and the salted fish so loved by the peasantry — there all the necessaries and luxuries of Finnish humble life were well in evidence.

The heat was somewhat oppressive, for in those homesteads the windows are never opened from year's end to year's end—indeed, most of them won't open at all.

In a corner hung a *kantele*, and as this romantic chamber, with its picturesque peasant occupants and its artistic effect, merely wanted the addition of the musical songs for which Finland is famous, and here was the very instrument hanging upon the wall, the farmer most kindly offered to play it for us.

In his white corduroy trousers, his coarse white shirt, the buttons of which were unfastened at the throat, and the collar loosely turned back, showing a bronzed chest, he looked like an operatic hero, the while he sat before his instrument and sang some of those wondrous songs dear to the heart of every Finn, for he could hardly have been worthy of his land had he failed to be musical, born and bred in a veritable garden of song and sentiment, and the romance of our midnight arrival seemed to kindle all the imagination in this man's nature. While he played the *kantele*, and the pilot made coffee, the old wife was busying herself in preparing for our meal, and we were much amused at her producing a key and opening the door of a dear old bureau, from which she unearthed some wonderful china mugs, each of which was tied up in a separate pocket-handkerchief. They had various strange pictures upon them, representing scenes in America, and it turned out that they had been brought home as a gift

to his parents from a son who had settled in the Far West.

We were indeed amazed when we were each handed a real silver spoon—not tin or electro—but real silver, and very quaint they were too, for the bowls were much bigger than the short handles themselves. These luxuries were in keeping with the beautiful linen on the beds, made by the old woman, and the wonderful white curtains in front of the windows, also woven by the housewife, who had likewise crocheted the lace that bordered them.

They had not those things because they were rich; for, on the contrary, they were poor. Such are the ordinary Finnish farmers' possessions; however small the homestead, linen and window curtains are generally to be found. So many comforts, coupled with the bare simplicity of the boards, the long benches for seats, and hard wooden chairs, did not lead us to expect the comic tragedy to follow.

It was 1 A.M., and we were all feeling quite merry again, after our warm coffee and milk, as we spread one of the rugs on the floor of the kitchen for the gentlemen—the boatmen lying on the boards, and our larger rug in the second room for the ladies, rolling our cloaks up into pillows, for the heat from the oven was so great that we did not want them. We lay down in our steaming clothes, which we dare not take off, to snatch a few hours' sleep, until the fog should kindly lift and enable us to get a couple of hours farther on our way to *Muhos*, from which place the little "cataract steamer" was to start at 7 A.M. for *Uleåborg*.

"Good-night—not a word," the last caution added because every one wanted to say how merciful it was that we had found such delightful shelter, warmth, and even food.

Obediently we settled down and prepared to enjoy our much-needed rest. A quarter of an hour passed; first one turned uneasily, and then another; the first one sighed, and then the second; first one spoke, and then another; first

one rose and went to the window, and then another. Could it be. No—yes—no! Oh the horror of it! the place was alive!

Only a quarter of an hour, yet we were bitten nearly to death, for we had made the personal acquaintance of a species of pest too horrible to name. It really was too much, we felt almost inclined to cry, the situation was so terrible. We could not go outside, for malaria and ague seemed imminent, we could not go on in our boat, for the rapids were dangerous in fog, death-traps in fact—what, oh what were we to do?

We heard movements in the kitchen. We called. The answer said "Come in, certainly," and we entered to find our men's hair literally standing on end as they stood, rug in hand, scanning the floor, over which a perfect zoological garden was promenading as coolly as flies on a hot summer's day over a kitchen ceiling—and we had no shoes or stockings on!

There were small red animals creeping sideways, there were little brown animals hopping, there were huge fat round beasts whose death left an unpleasant odour, there were crawling gray creatures, and every one was an enormous specimen of its kind, and—yes, 'tis true—they were there in millions!

It seems loathsome to write, but it was worse to see and feel, and one must write it, for the would-be traveller among the peasant homes of Finland ought to know what he may expect. Enchanting as the country is, interesting and hospitable as are its peasantry, the Finns must learn how to deal with such a curse or no one will dare to enter any dwelling, until the tourist club opens shelters everywhere and puts iron beds and good mattresses, and a capable woman to look after them all and keep them clean. Even the enthusiastic fisherman could not stand such bedfellows.

Six wooden chairs were placed in a row in the small porch, and there in the cold wet early morning air we sat

as quietly as circumstances would permit, for leaving the heated rooms did not mean leaving our tormentors.

We drew our coats round our shivering forms, we blew upon our chilled fingers to get up the circulation, we stared out at blank gray fog thick with malaria and ague.

Now came a revelation. The occupants of this house never slept in it during the hot weather. Why? Simply because they could not, and therefore, like many other peasants of Finland, they lie in the hayloft in the summer months for preference, and that was where our friend had come from to our help and succour, as we fondly believed, when he appeared like a benevolent apparition in that darkened doorway.

During all our horrors the farmer slept.

"We must not tell the people of the house what has happened," said our good-hearted student; "they would be most awfully offended, and there is no knowing what they might do with defenceless travellers in such an out-of-the-way spot."

"But we must pay them," I observed.

"Of course," agreed Grandpapa, "but we need not tell them that we have sat up on these chairs surrounded by a carpet of hay all night."

"But they will know," I ventured to remark. "We cannot clear away all this hay even if we move the chairs."

"I have it," said the student, after a long pause, during which we had all sought an excuse to enable us to depart without hurting the farmer's feelings, "I will tell them that we sat up here because the ladies wanted to see the sunrise."

"Just so," we all assented, gazing abstractedly towards the *west* at the black wall of the opposite barn, which totally obstructed all view of any kind, even if the fog had not made a sunrise an absolutely ridiculous suggestion. But we were all so weak and worn out that if any one had suggested

the *sunset* at three in the morning, we would still have said, "Just so." First one of us got up and went to see if there was the slightest chance of the mist clearing—peeped at a little baby calf standing alone in a shed, where it nearly had a fit with fright at the unexpected sight of visitors—walked round the house to see if the mist was clearing on the opposite side, and then all sat down dejectedly in a row again on those hard wooden seats. At last, when it was really time to leave, with an effort of will we made up our mind to go back to the bedroom to fetch an umbrella and a hat which had been left behind. It was lighter now, and as we stooped to pick up the umbrella, that had fallen upon the ground, we started back in horror, for a perfect colony of every conceivably sized and shaped crawling beast was walking over the floor! Gathering up our skirts we flew with winged feet from that haunted chamber, but not before we had seized upon the hat, which had lain upon the table, and out of which hopped and crawled enormous—well—we left that house as noiselessly as we had come, left it surrounded in fog, without waking a soul, after putting the money upon the table in payment for our night's lodging. We left, glad to shake its dust and its etceteras from our feet; but it will ever remain in our minds as a bad dream, a dream of another world, the world of insect land, into the mysteries of which we never wish to peep again.

The most wonderful bit of our journey was yet to come. The waves were too short and jumpy for the waves of the sea, and the boat too fragile for a sea boat, yet we did not even gasp now, we had got so accustomed to drenchings, and our nerves were steadier, if over-wrought, as we danced and plunged over these waters.

For some four or five miles the *Pyhakoski* rapid is narrower than those higher up the river, and sheer rocks rise from the water's edge and pine-trees skirt these on either side, literally growing out of the boulders without any apparent roots. It is a grand passage waterway: and one the return boats cannot manage at all, there being no

towing path, so that the oarsmen have to put their boats on carts and drive them across the land.

The mist disappeared as the sun rose, and the birds began to sing gaily as we jumped over the seething waters, till at last we saw before us a solid wall of high steep rock, rising perpendicularly seventy or eighty feet from the water. Surely this time death stared us in the face, for our steersman made straight for its hard cold base, round which whirled a roaring cataract. Had he gone to sleep or lost his senses, or was he paralysed with fatigue?

On, on, on we went; we glanced round anxiously to see what had happened to the man. He sat motionless, his eyes staring wildly before him, looking hardly human. Our hearts seemed positively to stand still as the boat's bow got within eight or nine feet of that massive wall, going straight for it, at a pace no one could believe who has not visited the spot and felt the horror of it.

We seemed on the very brink of eternity, gazing into the unknown, and as the drowning man reviews his whole life in a second, we in like manner saw our past, and peered into the future.

Our paralysing fear was fleeting; another moment and our boat's head flew to the left, our craft quivered all over, and then head first down the rapid she plunged into the swirling pool, with a feeling as if she were going up on the other side of the dancing waves. The danger was past, and our steersman's recently grim face assumed a look of happy content.

This rock, be it explained, is the most dangerous point between Russia and the Gulf of Bothnia; many and many a tar-boat has been shattered and lives lost at this spot, as it stands at a corner of a sharp turn of the cataract, and a regular whirlpool is always seething at its base—the water forming a fall of two or three feet—swirling round and going up again like a sort of wave. There is only one possible way to pass in safety, and that is to take the boat right up to the rock and turn, when almost too late, with such

dexterity that the boat descends on the falling wave at so wild a pace that she crosses the whirlpool too quickly to be sucked under, and then bounds away safely on the opposite breaker.

It was horrible—but it was grand.

We sat still and silent for a while!

CHAPTER XIX

SALMON—ULEÅBORG

To say we were tired hardly describes the situation. We were absolutely exhausted. So exhausted, in fact, were we, after our late experiences, that when—twenty-eight hours after leaving *Kajana*—we got into the little steamer at *Muhos* which was to convey us the last part of our journey to *Uleåborg*, we were nearly dead! This steamer plied to and fro on a wide stretch of the famous *Uleå* river, where the stream was quick and yet not a cataract. It was only a little vessel, without a cabin of any kind, and with hard uninviting wooden benches running along its stern end for the accommodation of passengers. We went on board before she started, and, feeling that we at last had a chance to rest, lay down all six speechless on the floor or the benches of the little boat, our heads supported merely by a rug or a travelling bag, and apparently fell asleep at once, for when we woke it was to find that a dozen peasants had assembled on board, all of whom were eagerly discussing us and staring at the sight of six exhausted strangers, whom report told them had descended the famous rapids the previous night at considerable danger. Even that short sleep refreshed us somewhat, and, but for the discomforts we had brought away with us from the hideous little gray house, we might have dreamed on for hours.

Oh, how glad we felt as our little droschkies drew up in front of the grand-looking stone hotel at *Uleåborg*, which

proved as uncomfortable inside as it was magnificent in appearance outside.

Having secured our rooms, out we all sailed with our little bundles of clean clothes packed under our arms, and as quickly as possible made our way to the public bath-houses, feeling that it would require all the bath-women in Finland to make us clean again!

If ever self-control in this world had been required, it had been called upon when we endeavoured, during the last hours of that horrible journey, to sit still and smile, and try and look comfortable.

Lapland! When we had talked of Lapland, kind friends had looked surprised, and in subdued tones and hushed whispers asked us if we knew what Lapland in the summer meant?

"There are many inhabitants in a Lap's hut," they said, "and although in the winter such things are kept in subjection by the cold, we should never dream of crossing over the border into Lapland in the summer time."

We had laughed their fears to scorn, and fully determined to pursue our way towards the Tundras and the land of the Samoyads, but our friends were right and we were wrong. After our recent experiences, we decided, with one accord, that wild horses and millions of golden pounds could not drag us through Lapland in summer, knowing the sort of horrors we should have to encounter, and which we had already endured to such an extent that we felt degraded, mentally, morally, and physically. A mosquito bite is perhaps the most hurtful of all. There is poison in it, and that means pain; but these other things, although not so harmful, are so loathsomely filthy that one feels ashamed to be oneself, and to hate one's own very existence.

Surely there can be no inhabited house duty in Finland or the State would indeed be rich!

The *Uleåborg* salmon is among the most famous in the world. Seeing the fish caught is very interesting, especially when the *take* happens to be about 200! The *Uleå* river

is very wide, and for a hundred or more miles up its course are the famous rapids, which we had been fortunate enough to descend alive, as described in the last chapter. How the salmon manage to swim against such a force of water must ever remain a marvel; but they do, and the fishing near *Waala* and various other stretches is excellent. In the winter months all but the waterfalls—and even some of them—are frozen solid; it is during these spells of cold that trees are thrown on to the ice to be conveyed, free of charge, to *Uleåborg* on the rushing waters of spring. Not dozens, but thousands and thousands of trees are carried by such means down to the coast. This goes on until the 10th of June, and, therefore, it is not until then that the salmon piers, with their nets, can be put up. Accordingly, on the 10th of each June sixty men start work at *Uleåborg*, and in eight days erect two barriers, about three hundred yards apart, each crossing the entire stream, except for one spot left clear for the boats to pass through. These piers are very simple, and one wonders that such fragile erections can withstand the immense rush. Wooden staves are driven into the ground with great difficulty, planks are laid upon them, and then large stones are piled up which keep all steady, the whole thing being bound together by rope made of birch-tree branches.

On either side of the barrier are the nets, perhaps a hundred altogether, or twenty-five a side on each of the pier erections. They resemble nets on the Thames or anywhere else, except that they are much larger, being intended to catch big fish.

We were so fascinated the first time we went to see the salmon caught, that we returned the second day to watch the performance again. We little dreamed that our curiosity in their fishing was exciting equal interest in the *Uleåborg* folk. Such, however, was the case, as a notice afterwards appeared in the paper to say that the English ladies had been twice to look at the salmon-catching, had appeared much interested in what they saw, had asked many ques-

tions, etc. It was a good thing we were not up to any mischief, as the Finnish press was so fond of chronicling all our doings.

At five o'clock every morning, and at five o'clock every evening the nets are lifted, and, as a rule, one might say about a hundred fish are taken each time, although we were fortunate enough to see a catch of nearly twice that number. Some of them were little—weighing only two or three pounds—but the average appeared to be about twenty pounds, while one or two turned the scale at forty.

About a dozen men assembled on the bank, all smoking their everlasting pipes, some who had been lying asleep on the grass being roused from their slumbers, for it was five in the afternoon and time for them to start on their "catch." Each wooden pier was to be tackled by half a dozen men in a tar-boat, and, as we were particularly anxious to see this done, I persuaded one of the men to let me join his party, which he only allowed me to do after I had faithfully promised to sit perfectly still. I have described what cockly things these tar-boats are, even filled with their barrels or luggage for ballast, but when perfectly empty, as they always are, except for the weight of half a dozen men, when they go to fetch the salmon, it is a perfect marvel they do not upset. They are not so long, however, as those used for the rapids, although they are pointed the same at both ends, and the planks are equally wide and as quaintly tied together. Off I went to the farthest end of one of these long wooden vessels; the boat was punted to the desired spot, the water apparently not being very deep at that point, and, having brought their craft up sideways against the wooden erection with its nets, the men who had run along the top of the pier—a somewhat dangerous proceeding—drew the net sluices up one by one so that the men in our boat might get at the salmon, while one of her crew, with a long stick and a hook at the end, pulled the net from the bed of the river. It was most awfully exciting; sometimes the meshes would come up with half a dozen

fish in them, sometimes disappointment awaited the fishermen, for they got nothing. But what struck me as particularly strange was the fact that half the salmon were dead and half were alive; apparently the dead ones had been in the net some hours (more than twelve was impossible as they had been taken up at 5 A.M.) Two or three hours captivity, however, with such a tremendous weight of water passing over them was enough to knock the life out of any fish. It was a trying moment when a monster salmon, struggling frantically, was pulled half into our boat; but the men very cleverly speared them or knocked them on the head with a large mallet, which killed them instantly. Ere half an hour elapsed we had emptied all the nets along our pier, and with the boat well filled with beautiful shining fish, we returned to the little landing-stage from which we originally started.

As those fish—nearly two hundred in number—lay on that small wooden pier they made a mighty show, and it seemed wonderful to consider that seventy or eighty salmon had been taken at the same spot only a few hours previously, while one hundred and twenty-five miles farther up the river something between fifty and a hundred are netted daily.

Everything was managed in the most business-like fashion, and with great cleanliness. Two men, one on either side of the pier, sat on tubs turned upside down and, each with a knife in his hand, proceeded to clean the fish. They cut its throat, and, with the most marvellous rapidity, cleansed it, the mysteries from the interior being put aside for sale to the poor; then another man came forward and, picking up the fish thus prepared, washed it most carefully in the stream. In a very short space of time the whole catch of salmon were lying cleaned and washed upon the dripping pier. They were then put on trucks or wheel-barrows and rolled up to the ice-house. Here all the fish were accurately weighed, the number of kilos. being entered in a ledger, and, after sorting out the large from

the small, they were packed into ice in enormous wooden tubs, and within a couple of hours most of them were on their way to St. Petersburg.

The river does not belong to the State, but the people in the neighbourhood; some three hundred, including many peasants, have an interest in it, and have formed themselves into a company. There is a manager who arranges all the fishing, engages ten or twelve men to make the nets, keep them in order, take them up for the salmon, and pack the fish when ready for export.

In 1895 Russia had undertaken to buy every kilo. of fish caught at a fixed price, therefore it was impossible for private individuals to procure even a pound of the famous *Uleåborg* salmon in *Uleåborg* itself!

Last summer nearly seventy thousand marks worth of fish were taken during the short season; that is to say, the net fishing begins on the 10th of June and ends during the last days of August, when the nets and the piers have to be taken away and packed up carefully for the following summer's use.

It was at this salmon ground that my sister and I were much amused at two little incidents.

We were sitting on a wooden bench, waiting till all should be ready, when one of the fishermen came and stood before us. He was smoking and his hands were in his pockets as he paused within a few feet of us in a most leisurely manner. He did not do so rudely, although perhaps somewhat awkwardly. As he was evidently a Finlander we felt unable to converse with the gentleman, and therefore merely smiled.

"You speak English?" he said in that language.

"Certainly," we replied, somewhat taken aback.

"So do I," he rejoined.

As he was a very poor-looking person, with tattered clothing, and a very Finnish countenance, we were somewhat amazed, and we asked if he were a Scotchman, that type more closely resembling the Finn than the Saxon race.

"No," he replied, "I am a Finn, but was a sailor for years, and I have been over to America as an emigrant."

"You speak English wonderfully well," we answered, really surprised at the purity of the man's accent.

"Yes," he said, "I was several years in America, where I lost all the money I had made at sea. It took me a long time to collect enough to come home again, but I have just come back, and if not richer, anyway I hope I'm wiser." And he thereupon began to explain the disadvantages of emigration.

Imagine in the far North, almost on the borders of Lapland, being addressed in our own tongue by a man in rags! We were astonished; yet all over Finland one meets with sailors who speak the Queen's English, and in *Uleåborg* we were struck with the fact on two other occasions—the first being when the man at the helm of a small penny steamer addressed us, and the second when a blue-coated policeman entered into conversation!

This shows how universal our language is becoming. But still, although English is the language of commerce, and with English one can travel all over the world, better than with any other tongue, the only way really to enjoy and appreciate voyaging in foreign lands is either to speak the language of the people, or, if that cannot be managed, to have some one always at hand capable and willing to translate.

As we left the salmon ground a lady, who had apparently been watching the proceedings from afar, desiring to know more of such strange beings as the "two English ladies," advanced, and, on the trifling pretext of asking if we had lost our way, addressed us in excellent French.

We thanked her, and replied we had been for several days in *Uleåborg* and knew our way quite well; but she was not to be baffled—she came to have a talk and she meant to have it—therefore she walked beside us the whole way back to the hotel, giving us little bits of information, though much more inclined to ask us questions than to answer those to which we were really in need of replies.

Will any one deny that the Finlander is inquisitive? Perhaps the reader will be inquisitive too when he learns that unintentionally we made a match! Nevertheless, the statement is quite true. We, most innocent and unoffending. We who abhor interference in all matrimonial affairs. We, without design or intent, made a match.

It came about in this way.

By mere chance we chaperoned a charming and delightful girl down the Gulf of Bothnia. Her coming with us was only decided upon during the last five minutes of our stay, and her clothes were positively repacked on the platform of the station to enable her to do so at all.

We had been given introductions to a delightful Baron at one of the towns *en route* to *Hangö*, and having arrived at our destination, and not being masters of the language, we asked our maiden fair to kindly telephone in her own language and acquaint the Baron with the fact of our arrival. She did so; they were strangers, and heard each the other's dulcet tones for the first time through the mechanical mysteries of the telephone. The Baron joined us an hour later, he invited us to dinner, he escorted us about, he drove us to a park, he sat beside us in the evening while we drank coffee and admired the view. He came to see us off the following day, he gave us books and flowers as a parting gift, and we left.

Pangs of remorse fill my soul as I write these lines. For the twenty-four hours we remained in that town I monopolised this delightful Baron. I plied him with questions, I insisted on his showing me everything there was to be seen of interest, and telling me many things I wished to know about his country, and, with regret, truth compels me to repeat that, so dense were my powers of perception, I monopolised him almost entirely.

We left Finland shortly after this, but we had hardly reached our native shore before a letter from the charming girl arrived, in which she said, "Fancy, the Baron turned up here the other day, and the day after his arrival he proposed,

I accepted him, and we shall be married by the end of the month."

Comment is needless. Romance will have its sway in spite of dense Englishwomen and stupid writers, who do not see what is going on under their noses, in their search for less interesting information elsewhere!

From romance to reality is but a span, and fishermen, and their name is legion, may be glad to learn a little about the fishing in Finland, and that the best rivers lie in the governor's province of *Wiborg*. There are lake salmon, trout, and grayling; minnows and sand-eels are specially favoured as bait.

In the Government district of *St. Michael* excellent sport is also to be found, especially *Salmo criox* and trout. Dead bait is chiefly used. But a large stretch of this water is rented by the *Kalkis fisks Klubb*.

In the district of *Kuopio* permission to fish may be obtained from Henriksson, the manager of a large iron-work at *Warkan* (*Warkans* and *Komms*). Silk bait and Devon minnows prove most useful.

In the province of *Uleåborg* salmon of every kind can be caught at *Waala*, where there is a charge of ten marks (eight shillings) for the season. There are also trout and grayling, and the ordinary English flies and minnows are the best bait, Jock Scott, Dry Doctor, Zulu, and shrimp being great favourites. Sportsmen can put up at *Lannimalio*, or *Poukamo*, at the peasants' small farms; but information is readily given by the English Consul at *Uleåborg*, who, although a Finlander, knows English well.

At the town of *Kajana* two marks a day is charged for trout and grayling fishing, but in the adjacent rivers, *Hyrynsalmi* and *Kukmo*, the fishing is free.

On the borders of Russia, at *Kem*, the best grayling fishing perhaps in the world is to be found.

The sport generally begins on the 1st April, and ends at *Waala* on 15th September, and at *Kajana* a few days later.

Practically all the fishing is free, and when not so, the

charge is merely nominal. Near *Waala* salmon up to 50 lbs., grayling 5½ lbs., or trout 18 lbs. are not uncommon.

There is no netting except at two points on the *Uled* river, and there is a great move nowadays to take the nets off from Saturday to Monday to let the fish free.

Herman Renfors is the best fisherman in Finland; he lives in a charming house at *Kajana*, and is courteous enough to give any information he can to foreign brothers concerning the piscatorial art. He speaks and writes English, and is not only an enthusiastic fisherman, but a delightful companion. He told us that during five days, in September 1885, he caught the following:—

Sept. 9.	18 Grayling . . . weighing 19 lbs.		
	8 Salmon, 5, 5, 6, 6, 7, 9, 24, 31 = 93 „		
			112 lbs.
„ 10.	18 Grayling . . . weighing 21 lbs.		
	7 Salmon, 4, 5, 6, 16, 27, 30, 40 = 128 „		
			149 lbs.
„ 11.	18 Grayling . . . weighing 16 lbs.		
	5 Salmon, 7, 18, 26, 36, 52 = 139 „		
			155 lbs.
„ 12.	6 Grayling . . . weighing 6 lbs.		
	8 Salmon, 5, 5, 6, 7, 14, 29, 30, 43 = 139 „		
			145 lbs.
„ 13.	6 Grayling . . . weighing 6 lbs.		
	6 Salmon, 4, 2, 5, 31, 32, 33 = 107 „		
			113 lbs.
	Total in five days . . .		674 lbs.

Verily a record. His sister made his flies; and the salmon which weighed 52 lbs. he got with a salmon-spoon of his own make. He uses a spinning-rod, 11 feet long, or a fly-rod 14 feet long. We saw him fishing in the famous rapids, and never shall we forget the dexterity of his throw, or the art of his "play." He once caught 1600 lbs. of fish in three weeks. Masters of the piscatorial art, does not envy enter your souls?

But this is digression, and our narrative demands that we proceed—after having got rid of the inquisitive French-

speaking lady, noted how we made a match, and given a few fishing hints—to tell how a twopenny fare in a little steamboat from *Uleåborg* brought us to the tar stores. On a Finnish steamboat one often requires change, so much paper money being in use, and the plan for procuring it is somewhat original. In neat little paper bags change for half a mark or a whole mark is securely fastened down, the colour of the bag indicating the amount of money it contains, therefore there can be no cheating. If one wants a mark changed the ticket-collector immediately produces a little sealed envelope containing a mark in pence, and having opened it one pays him whatever may be due.

From 50,000 to 70,000 barrels of tar are deposited every summer by the boats which shoot the *Uleå* rapids upon the quay near the town. What a sight! There they were piled two and three high like pipes of wine in the great London vaults, but in this case the barrels were not under cover, but simply lay on a quay that was railed in. Every barrel had to be tested before final shipment, and when we arrived a man was going round for this purpose trying each cask after the bung had been extracted. He wore high boots, and carried his ink-bottle in his boot leg as the London brewer carries his ink in his coat pocket. Then a helper, who followed behind, thumped in the bung while the foreman made his notes in a book, and in a few minutes a man or a woman came and rolled the barrel away. Those employed in the task wore strong leather gloves with no fingers—only a thumb, and so tarred they were absolutely hard, as also their boots from walking over the tarry ground. And yet all the faces were beautifully clean, and the clothes almost spotless.

The ground at these stores is literally sodden with tar, though here and there little drains are cut in order to collect it; the air being permeated by its wholesome smell.

Fancy if such a quay caught fire! Fancy those thousands of barrels in flames—and yet a famous admiral once set fire to this very tar store in the name of England; a little act

of destruction that Finland has never quite forgiven Great Britain.

After spending some days in *Uleåborg*, it became necessary to make a forward move—not towards Lapland, as originally intended, for that had been vetoed as impossible in summer. We were still hundreds, we might almost say thousands, of miles from home, when we arranged to leave our pleasant quarters on the following afternoon for *Hangö*.

What a truly national experience! First of all, the Petersburg steamer, by which we were to travel, though announced to start at 3 P.M., never left its moorings till 4.40. Only one hour and forty minutes late, but that was a mere trifle to a Finn. The cargo was taken on board up to the very last minute—18 enormous barrels of salmon (twice or thrice the size of 18-gallon casks of beer), 500 rolls of leather, which, having come as raw skins from America, had been dressed in *Uleåborg* ready for *Riga*, whither the consignment was bound, also a hundred big baskets, made of the plaited bark so common in Finland, filled with glue, likewise the product of a leather factory.

One thing amazed us immensely; viz. that our steamer was allowed to lie almost alongside of the tar stores we had so lately visited. With the aid of only one single spark from her chimney all those barrels would immediately be ablaze. However, the genial English-speaking captain, as well as the English Consul who had come to see us off, set our minds at rest by explaining that the steamer only burnt coal, no wood-burning boat being allowed near the tar—the coal making few sparks and wood many. Fancy, coal! we had not seen or heard of coal for weeks; all the trains, the houses, and the steamboats, burn wood only, except the large ships that go right out to sea, and they could not burn wood, because of its bulk, unless they dragged a dozen barges behind them to give a continuous supply on the voyage.

Another Finnish scene was being enacted around us. About a dozen emigrants were leaving their native land

by way of *Hangö*, where they were to change steamers for England, and pass thence to America. They had paid seven or eight pounds each for their passage money, and were going off to seek their fortunes in a new world—going to a strange country, speaking another tongue than their own, going away from all they had on earth, from friends, relations, associations, going full of hope, perchance to fail! Our hearts ached for them as they sat on their little boxes and bundles on the quays, among the sixty or seventy friends who had come to see them off. The bell rang; no one moved. It rang again, when each said to the other *Hurversti* (good-bye), and with a jaunty shake of the hand all round, the emigrants marched on board, and our ship steamed away, without a wet eye or a smothered sob!

Will nothing move these people? Is it that they hide their feelings, or is it that they have none to conceal?

As we passed out of the harbour our thoughts recurred to heart-breaking farewells on board P. & O. and Orient steamers, where the partings are generally only for a few years, and the voyagers are going to lands speaking their own language and to appointments ready waiting for them. How strange is the emigrant, and how far more enigmatical the Finn!

Our steamer *Åbo* was delightful, quite the most comfortable we chanced on in Finland; the captain, a charming man, fortunately spoke excellent English, although over the cabin door was written a grand specimen of a Swedish word—*Aktersalongspassagerare*, meaning first-class passenger saloon.

Although the *Åbo* plied from *Uleåborg* to Petersburg, and was a large passenger steamer, she stopped at many places for two or three hours at a time, in order to take in passengers and cargo, while we lay-to at night because of the dangers of the coast, and waited half a day at *Wasa*, one of the most important towns in Finland. The train journey from *Uleåborg* to *Åbo* occupies thirty hours, while the steamer dawdles placidly over the same distance for three days and a half.

Have you ever travelled with a melon? If not, you have lost a delightful experience—please try. At one of the many halting-places on our way to *Hangö*, we were wandering through the streets on a very hot day, when in a shop window some beautiful melons attracted our attention.

"Oh!" exclaimed my sister, "we must have one, how cool and refreshing they look."

"What shall we do with it?" I asked.

"Send it down to the steamer," was her reply, "it will be so nice on board."

We accordingly went in, bought the melon with the help of our best Swedish, for here, being opposite Sweden, that language was still in vogue; we explained it was to go to the *ongboat, hutt* (cabin) number ten, and left cheerfully.

We returned to our steamer home; while leaving the harbour we remained on deck, and it was not until late in the evening, when the ship began to roll considerably, that we went below. At the head of the cabin stairs a most extraordinary odour greeted our senses; as we neared our cabin the smell increased, when we opened the door we were nearly knocked down by the terrible scent of the melon which had looked so charming in the shop window. Though very hot all day, as the weather had been decidedly rough for some hours, the port-hole was closed, therefore the melon had thoroughly scented the queer little cabin.

"This is impossible," I exclaimed. "I never smelt anything so dreadful in my life. We cannot sleep in such an atmosphere."

My sister looked crestfallen.

"It is rather strong," said she pensively; "shall we put it outside?"

"No," I replied, "if we, who bought it, cannot endure the smell, how are the wretched occupants on the other side to put up with such an inconvenience?"

"Then we must eat it," she remarked with conviction, and, undoing the paper and cutting a slice, she proceeded

solemnly to devour that melon. Strangely enough, in spite of its overpowering odour, the fruit tasted delicious, for, be it owned, I ate some too, and when we had enjoyed our feast we opened the port-hole and threw its rind into a watery grave. We had not been long in bed before we heard a great commotion outside—an appeal to the stewardess, then angry words, and at last a regular row. Dare we own the cause? *It was our melon!*

No one knew it was our melon, but half awake, holding on to keep in our bunks at all, we lay and listened to the angry discussion, feeling it could serve no good purpose if we got up to confess a dead and buried sin. Nevertheless, that melon lay long on our consciences. We will never voluntarily travel with one again!

We did not fall asleep till we had pulled up for the night, for so dangerous is the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia that during the few dark hours ships never continue their course, even in smooth weather.

As we lay we reviewed our past experiences, and thought over the towns of *Suomi*. *Uleåborg*, which we had just left, is perhaps the most northerly town of any importance in Europe, and, after *Helsingfors*, it is the most imposing in Finland. *Wiborg*, which from its position is on the high road to Russia, ought to be handsome also and have good stone buildings, but it is not handsome, and has few good buildings. *Willmanstrand* is merely a collection of small wooden houses, some barracks, and numberless tents for camping out. *Nyslott* is scattered, and of no importance were it not for its Castle and its new bath-house. *Kuopio* is perhaps the most picturesquely situated inland town in Finland, and the view from *Puijo*, a hill of some height behind the township, is really good on a fine night. It is very extensive, and gives a wonderful idea of the lakes and islands, rivers and forests of which Finland is composed. *Iisalmi* is nothing—hardly possesses an hotel, in fact—and *Kajana* not much better, although the rapids make it of great interest. *Sordavala*, as a town, is simple, neither

beautifully situated nor interesting, except as a centre of learning, for it possesses wonderful schools for men and women. *Tammerfors* may be called the Manchester of Finland; but the towns are really hardly worth mentioning as towns, being all built of wood and utterly lacking historical interest. The towns are the weak part of Finland. The water-ways are the amazement of every traveller; the people most interesting. That both have a charm, and a very distinct charm, cannot be denied, and therefore Finland is a country well worth visiting. For the fisherman there is splendid sport. For the gun there is much game, and in some parts both are free. To the swimmer there are endless spots to bathe; in a canoe the country can be traversed from end to end. For the botanist there are many interesting and even arctic flowers. For the artist there are almost unequalled sunsets and sky effects. For the pedestrian there are fairly good roads,—but for the fashionable tourist who likes Paris, London, or Rome, there is absolutely no attraction, and a Saratoga trunk could not find lodging. There are a few trains and many boats in parts, but, once away from these, the traveller must rough it in every sense; leave all but absolutely necessary luggage behind, and keep that well within bounds; must be prepared to live on peasant's fare, such as fish, milk, coffee, eggs, black bread and butter (all of which are excellent); must never be in a hurry, must go good-naturedly and cheerfully to work, and, above all, possess a strong constitution that can endure eight or ten hours jolting a day in carts without springs. Such travelling is the only way to see the country, and learn the habits and customs of the people; the *Karelen* and *Savolax* districts being especially worth visiting by any one who has such objects in view. We dropped off to sleep, feeling our visit had been well worth the little inconveniences we laughed away—and that Finland was much to be preferred for a holiday than many a better-known country.

At different little towns along the Gulf of Bothnia the

steamer stopped in answer to a "call," and some passenger clambered on board from a small boat, which mode of proceeding reminded us of the ships that go round Oban and Mull and such Scotch ports, where the same sort of thing goes on, the letters being dropped by the vessel as she passes.

At *Jacobstad*, our first real halting-place, we stayed six hours to take on board many barrels of tar made in the neighbourhood, chicory, etc. Beside us two large steamers (German and English) were being laden with wood. Britain was taking some thousands of solid staves, about five feet long, for the coal-pits at home, where they are used as supports. Germany's importation was planks, probably for building purposes. Women were doing all the work; they were pushing truck-loads along a railway line, lifting the staves one by one on to a primitive sort of truck-like arrangement that could be dragged on board by the crane, and very heavy work it appeared, although they did not seem to mind much. The English boat was already full, but the wood was being stacked up on the deck as high as the bridge. As she was a steamer, it seemed hardly profitable to burn coal to convey wood to Britain! All round the harbour, if we can give it such a name, were rafts still in the water, or stacks of wood in a more advanced condition ready for export. The rafts were being taken to pieces now they had reached the coast; men standing to their waists in water loosened the ties, while horses pulled the pine-tree trunks on shore. Finns have no time to idle in the summer, for it is during those four or five months that everything must be done, and sufficient money earned to keep them for the rest of the year. Luckily the days are long, and certainly the peasantry take advantage of the light, for they seem to work hard for eighteen or twenty hours at a stretch.

Wasa is celebrated for its beautiful girls; and remembering that during eight or nine weeks in Finland we had seen no pretty peasants, and only about as many good-looking

girls of the better class as could be counted on the fingers of both hands, full of pleasant anticipation we went on shore to see these beauteous maids—and—there were none. The town was deserted, every one had gone away to their island or country homes, and no doubt taken the pretty girls with them. At all events they had left *Wasa*, which, to our surprise, was lined by boulevards of trees,—quite green and picturesque, stone houses here and there, and an occasional villa—so if we did not find lovely females, we at least beheld one of the nicest-looking towns of Finland.

Every one in it spoke Swedish. For weeks we had been travelling through parts of the country where Finnish was the only tongue, but here we were in another atmosphere. Soon after leaving *Uleåborg* we found the peasants speaking Swedish. In winter they can walk over the Gulf of Bothnia to Sweden, so it is hardly to be wondered at that they preserve their old language. It is the same all the way down the coast to *Helsingfors*. Of course we went to the baths at *Wasa;* we always did everywhere. There are no baths in hotels or on board ships, but each town has its warm baths, and its swimming-baths railed off on the water-side, and there are regular attendants everywhere.

Lo! in the swimming-bath two mermaids played and frolicked when we entered, and, let us own at once, they were two very beautiful girls—so beautiful, in fact, that we feel we ought to retract our remarks anent the lack of loveliness in the female sex. Somewhat hungry after our dip we went to the café—and to another surprise. The girl behind the counter was lovely. Well—well—here was the third beauty in one day, and all hidden from masculine gaze, for two had been at the ladies' swimming-bath, and the third was in a café for ladies only. Poor men of Finland, how much you have missed!

We asked for rolls and butter and jam, with a cup of coffee, as we were not dining till 3.30. The lovely maid opened her eyes wide.

An endless source of amusement to the natives was the

Englishwomen eating jam! Although they have so many wonderful berries in Finland, and make them into the most luscious preserves, they eat the sweetened ones as pudding and the unsweetened with meat, but such a thing as eating *Hjörtron* on bread and butter was considered too utterly funny an idea. At the little café at *Wasa* the brilliant notion seized us of having white bread, butter, and *Hjörtron* preserve. Our kind Finnish friend gave the order, and the pretty girl repeated—

"*Hjörtron?* But there is no meat."

"We don't want any meat; but the ladies would like some jam with their coffee."

"Then shall I bring you cream to eat it as pudding?" she asked, still more amazed.

"No," was the reply, "they will eat it spread on bread and butter."

"What! *Hjörtron* on bread and butter!" the waitress exclaimed. "Impossible!"

And to her mind the combination was as incongruous as preserves eaten with meat would be to the ordinary English peasant, or as our mint sauce served with lamb seems to a foreigner, who also looks upon our rhubarb tart as a dose of medicine!

Another thing that surprised the folk was that we always wanted salt. It is really very remarkable how seldom a Finlander touches salt at all, indeed, they will sit down and calmly eat an egg without even a grain. Perhaps there is something in the climate that makes it less necessary for them than other folk, because we know that in the interior of some parts of Africa the craving for salt is so dreadful that a native will willingly give the same weight in gold for its equivalent in salt.

We stopped at *Åbo*, the ancient capital of Finland, justly proud of its stone cathedral. Two things struck us as extraordinary in this building. The first were long words painted on several of the pews—"*För Mattvards-gäster Rippiwäteä warten*," which, being translated into

English, notified "For those who were waiting for the communion."

The second thing was a mummy, almost as old as the cathedral itself, which was begun in the year 1258 by Bishop Heinrich. Stay, yet a third thing caught our attention — the Scotch names on the monuments, the descendants of which people still live in Finland. Many Scotch settled in *Suomi* centuries ago, and England has the proud honour of having sent over the first Protestant bishop to Finland.

We saw marvellous mummies—all once living members of some of the oldest families in Finland; there they lie in wondrous caverns in the crypt, but as formerly tourists were wicked enough to tear off fingers and so forth in remembrance of these folks, they are now no longer shown. However, that delightful gentleman, the Head of the Police who escorted us about *Åbo*, had the mysterious iron trap-door in the floor uplifted, and down some steep steps—almost ladder-like, with queer guttering tallow dips in our hands—we stumbled into the mummies' vault. The mummies themselves were not beautiful. The whole figure was there, it is true, but shrivelled and blackened by age. The coffins or sarcophagi in which they lay were in many cases of exquisite workmanship.

We cannot dwell on the history of the cathedral, which has played such an important part in the religious controversies of the country, any more than we may linger among the mummies and general sights of the respective towns, because this in no way purposes to be a guide-book. All information of that kind is excellently given in Dr. August Ramsey's admirable little guide to his own land, which has been translated into several languages. For the same reason we must pass over the interesting castle—not nearly so delightful though as our dear old haunted pile at *Nyslott*—with its valuable collection of national curiosities, among which figures an old-fashioned flail, used until comparatively modern times, to beat the devil from out the church!

It was at *Åbo* we were introduced to one of the greatest delicacies of Finland.

Crayfish, for which the Finnish word is *rapu*, appear to be found in nearly all the lakes and rivers in the South and middle of Finland. Oh, how we loved those crayfish! There is a close season for them which lasts from the 1st of May until the 15th of July, but immediately after the latter date they are caught by the tens of thousands and sent in large consignments to St. Petersburg, Stockholm, and even Berlin. Catching these little crayfish is not only a profession, but also a great source of amusement to young and old among the better class.

At night, or the early morning, is the best time for the sport. A man takes ten or more sticks, to the end of each of which he fastens a piece of string about thirty to fifty centimetres long. To this string he secures a piece of meat, which, be it owned, is considered by the little fish a more dainty morsel when slightly tainted. These sticks he fixes to the bank or holds in his hands, so that the piece of meat is below the surface of the water. Having secured what may be called all his fishing-rods safely at a certain distance, he wanders along the banks observing carefully where a crayfish is hanging on to a piece of meat by its claws. When such is the case he quickly gets hold of a landing-net, and placing it under its little black shell lifts the animal out of the water. Then he goes to the next stick, and generally the crayfish catch on so quickly, he is busily employed the whole time going from one rod to another. The more professional catchers have a net under the bait, but that is not really necessary. Young men and women thoroughly enjoy these crayfish parties, where it is said the maidens sometimes catch other fish than the *rapu!*

It was really amazing, in the market-place at *Åbo*, to see the large baskets filled with these little crayfish. Think of it, ye gourmands! They were not sold singly or even by the score, but by the hundred; and a hundred of them

cost fourpence. When one remembers the enormous price paid in Paris for *bisque* soup, and the expense of *écrevisse*, generally, one feels what a fortune ought to lie in those baskets. But such is life. We either have too much or too little of everything!

CHAPTER XX

A FASHIONABLE WATERING-PLACE

ONE cannot be long in Finland during the summer without being asked "Are you going to *Hangö*?" "See Rome and die" seems there to be transformed into "See *Hangö* and live."

"Where is *Hangö*, what is *Hangö*—why *Hangö*?" we at last inquired in desperation.

The Finlander to whom we spoke looked aghast, and explained that "not to have heard of *Hangö* was a crime, not to have been to *Hangö* a misfortune."

Accordingly, desiring to do the correct thing before leaving the land of thousands of lakes, we took the steamer from the ancient town of *Åbo*, to the modern fashionable watering-place of *Hangö*.

It was ten o'clock at night when we arrived from *Åbo*, and were met with warm welcome by kind friends on the quay, with whom we drove to the hotel, as we thought, but that was quite a mistake! We were at *Hangö*, and within five minutes the *Isvoschtschik* stopped before a pavilion where music was jingling inspiriting tunes; up the steps we were hurried, and at the top found ourselves, travel-stained and tired, in the midst of a wild and furious Finnish, or, to speak more properly, Russian ball!

It was a strange spectacle. At first we thought that some sixty or seventy sailors from the four Russian men-of-war lying in the harbour had been let out for the evening, their blue serge blouses and lighter linen collars with white

stripes having a very familiar air, still it seemed strange that such smart ladies, in dainty gowns, hats flowered in Paris, and laces fingered in Belgium, should be dancing with ordinary able-bodied seamen. Ere long we discovered these sailors were cadets, or midshipmen, as we should call them, among the number being two Russian princes and many of the nobility. Then there were officers in naval uniform, elderly Generals—who had merely come in to have a look—clad in long gray coats lined with scarlet; small persons wearing top-boots and spurs, with linen coats and brass buttons, who smilingly said they were "in the Guards," although their stature hardly reminded us of their English namesakes! girls in shirts and skirts and sailor hats, got up for the seaside and comfort, who looked as much out of place in this Casino ballroom as many high dames appeared next morning while wandering down to the "Bad Hus" to be bathed in mud or pine, their gorgeous silk linings and lace-trimmed skirts appearing absolutely ridiculous on the sandy roads or beach. To be well-dressed is to be suitably dressed, and *Hangö*, like many another watering-place has much to learn in the way of common sense.

It was Sunday. The ball had begun as usual on that evening at seven, and was over about eleven; but while it lasted every one danced hard, and the youngsters from the ships romped and whirled madly round the room, as youth alone knows how. We all get old very soon—let us enjoy such wild delights while we may!

No one with a slender purse should go to *Hangö*, not at least unless he has made a bargain with an hotel, or he will find that even a little Finnish watering-place ventures to charge twelve marks (9s. 9d.) a day for a small room, not even facing the sea (with 1 mark 50 penni for *bougies* extra), in a hotel that has neither drawing-room, billiard-room, nor reading-room. But it must again be repeated that Finland is not cheap, that travelling indeed is just as expensive there as anywhere else abroad, more expensive, in

fact, than in some of the loveliest parts of Tyrol, or the quaintest districts of Brittany and Normandy. And perhaps the most distressing part of the whole business is the prevalent idea that every Englishman must be immensely rich, and consequently willing to pay whatever ridiculous sum the Finns may choose to ask—an idea which cannot be too soon dispelled.

Hangö is certainly a charming spot as far as situation goes, and lies in more salt water than any other place in Finland, for it is the nearest point to the German Ocean, while during the winter months it is the only port that is open for Finland and Northern Russia—even this is not always the case, though an ice-breaker works very hard day and night to disperse the ice, which endeavour generally proves successful, or the winter export of butter, one of Finland's greatest industries, would be stopped and perhaps ruined.

Out to sea are islands; skirting the coasts are splendid granite rocks, showing the glacial progress later than in other lands, for Finland remained cold longer than our own country. Pine-trees make a sort of park thickly studded with wooden villas of every shape and size, some gray, some deep red, all with balconies wide enough to serve for dining-rooms, though the pretty villas themselves are often only one storey high. It is very difficult in such a seaside labyrinth to find one's friends, because most of the houses are nameless, and many are not even on roads—just standing lonely among the pines. They are dear little homes, often very picturesque and primitive, so primitive that it utterly bewilders any stranger, unaccustomed to such incongruities, to see a lady in patent leather shoes and silk stockings, dressed as if going to Hurlingham or the Bois de Boulogne, emerge from one of them and daintily step through sand to the Casino—walking hither and thither, nodding a dozen times a day to the same acquaintances, speaking to others, gossiping over everything and everybody with a chosen few, while her daughter is left to play tennis with that

Finnish girl's idea of all manly beauty, "a lieutenant," or knocks a very big ball with a very small mallet through an ancient croquet hoop, that must have come out of the ark—that is to say, if croquet hoops ever went into the ark!

A dear, sweet, reposeful, health-giving, primitive place, spoilt by gay Russians and would-be-fashionable Finns, who seem to aim at aping Trouville or Ostend without the French *chic*, or the Parisian *gaieté de cœur!*

Wonderful summer evenings, splendid effects of light and shade on the water, beautiful scenery, glorious dawns and sunsets—everything was there to delight the poet, to inspire the painter, to tempt the worldly to reflect, but no one paused to think, only nodded to another friend, laughed over a new hat, chaffed about the latest flirtation, and passed on!

After studying many over-gowned ladies, we turned by way of contrast to the ill-dressed emigrants leaving this famous port. It certainly seems strange, considering the paucity of skilled labour in Finland, that so many of the population should emigrate. In fact, it is not merely strange but sad to reflect that a hundred folk a week leave their native country every summer, tempted by wild tales of certain fortune the steamship agents do not scruple to tell. Some of the poor creatures do succeed, it is true, but that they do not succeed without enduring much hardship is certain; whereas Finland wants skilled labourers badly, and other countries could spare them very well. For instance, in the large granite factory at *Hangö* some four hundred men are always employed, who are paid extremely well, and yet skilled labour of the sort is difficult to get—emigration being presented on all sides as a golden lure. Granite is found all over Finland; indeed, *Suomi* has risen from the sea on a base of granite, green, gray, red, and black, all of fine quality.

Five million roubles are being paid for the wonderful *Denkmal* to be erected at the Kremlin in Moscow as a memorial of Alexander the Second. The statue itself has

been entrusted to Russia's most famous sculptor, but the pedestals, stairs, etc., we saw in process of manufacture at *Hangö*. We were shown over the works by a professor well known as a mathematician, and were much interested to see how Finlanders cut and polish granite for tombstones, pillars, etc. The rough stone is generally hewn into form by hand, somewhat roughly with a hammer and mallet, then it is cut into blocks with a saw really made of pellets of steel powder!

Very slow and laborious work it is, which requires great exactitude. Often when the cutting is nearly accomplished some hidden flaw discloses itself, and a stone that had appeared of great value proves to be almost worthless; or the men when chipping the rough granite may suddenly find a flake too much has been chipped off by mistake, which involves not merely the loss of that block but of the labour expended on it.

Finnish granites are chiefly exported to Russia, but Scotland takes a few of the gray. Some of the more experienced workers earn as much as ten and twelve shillings per diem—higher pay being given to the best polishers. Flat polishing can be done by machinery, but one of the four pedestals intended to support the great Alexander monument was being polished round the crevices by three men, who had spent twenty-two days doing those few square feet, and on which, when we left, they were still at work.

Granite is a great trade in Finland, and might be a still greater, if Finns could only content themselves at home.

An afternoon we spent on one of the ships of the Russian squadron proved thoroughly enjoyable. The Admiral kindly invited us on board, and showed us over his vessel. The squadron at that time at *Hangö* consisted of four ships, two of which were utilised for training, one receiving young cadets from twelve to fourteen years of age, the other older lads who were waiting to be sent off as officers.

They arrange their naval training differently in Russia from what we do in England. That is to say, for six summer months cadets live on board the training-ships, but the six winter months are spent at the college in St. Petersburg, where they learn the theoretical part of their education.

A boat came to fetch us manned by twelve oars, all cadets, as well as the steersman who stood at the stern. They were the most charming lads imaginable, and during the following days we saw much of them, and learnt to appreciate their delightful manners, and to wonder more and more at their linguistic accomplishments. Several of them spoke English admirably, most knew French well, and some German. On an English training-ship, or, indeed, an English man-of-war, should we be likely to find such a large percentage acquainted with any language but their own? When we asked them how it was they were able to converse in foreign tongues so fluently, they invariably replied they had an English nurse or French governess in their home when young.

"But," we returned, "although you learnt it when children, how have you managed to keep it up as men?" For we know how our English schoolboys forget such languages as they learn at home, or are taught French and German on some hideous principle at school, which leaves them utterly incapable of understanding or speaking a word when they go out into the world.

"Oh," they answered, "we take great trouble to remember what we learnt when young, for a man must know something more than his own language. We all read foreign papers or books whenever we get an opportunity."

They were delightful young fellows, although we must own their dress at first somewhat surprised us, for they were clothed in our ordinary seamen's clothes—a white blouse and blue sailor collar, with white duck trousers, being their attire by day, or the same in blue serge by night.

They were unaffectedly proud of their ship, and showed us over it with great *éclat*, but we must confess that, although the Russians speak more languages than our own sailors, or officers for that matter, an English man-of-war seemed to us in every way smarter and better kept than a Russian.

Between decks was a piano, and the Admiral suggested that some of the boys should play the *Balalacka*, the great national instrument, which is something like a triangular guitar, and emits sweet sounds. One lad at once sat himself down to the piano, and five others fetching their *Balalacka*, played some of the quaint national airs of Russia. Then a young man performed most wonderfully on the violin, and it turned out that they had great concerts among themselves—music and chess being two of their chief recreations.

Every cadet wore round his neck a silver or gold chain with a little cross attached, for each member of the Greek Church has such bestowed in the following manner:—

A christening was about to take place at the Ysack in St. Petersburg. Never having seen the rite of baptism performed in a Greek church, we sat at the golden base of a colossal Finnish granite pillar waiting. There was the font —a large silver bath on a pedestal, big enough to hold a child of eight or ten. Round its edges were placed four candles, three of which were lighted. At a table near sat a long-haired priest, with a kindly face, who was taking down all the details of the children from the respective fathers, of whom there were five. The first was a young officer. He came forward when called upon, and produced from a pocket-book his passport, which every Russian carries about with him to prove his identity, his marriage certificate, etc. From the church documents the statistics of Russia are taken, for it is the priests who supply all such information. Into a book, therefore, our kindly-faced priest copied the father's and mother's names, the child's baptismal name, adding the name of the Saint given to the child when received into

the Church. On the father's passport of identity he entered the child's name, date of birth and baptism, afterwards duly signing the document. All this took a long time, and we were struck by the fact that one of the five fathers, a most respectable-looking person, could not write and had to put his ×. One often hears of Russian lack of education, but certainly it is difficult to conceive that, in any other civilised country, an individual of the same rank, for he appeared to be worth some hundreds a year, could have been met with unable to write his own name!

While all this was going on, the verger, if we may so call a uniformed gentleman in attendance, made himself busy in going from nurse to nurse collecting the baptismal garments. Each woman had brought a coverlet—a sort of white bedspread, and a small linen and lace chemise. A blue ribbon was run round the neck of the latter for a boy, and a pink one for a girl. Another small ribbon, on which hung a gold cross—the gift of the respective godfather—was placed round the child's neck as a blessing from the Church, and it was this we noticed every cadet wearing, no Russian ever going without. While this ceremony was in progress, the five babies, each one of which was only two or three days old, for infants must be baptized before they reach the age of eight days, yelled more or less—and no wonder.

At last all was ready; the five fathers gathered round the font, each holding the white coverlet into which he was to receive his new-born baby straight from the blessings of the Church, and between them stood the respective nurses holding their small charges. The priest donned a gorgeous robe, read the baptismal service, and went from infant to infant, crossing their heads, their hands, their feet with sacred oil, each baby lying naked the while in the coverlet its nurse had brought for the purpose. After another prayer he proceeded—hot water having been added to the font—to baptize them, and very cleverly he managed this extremely difficult undertaking. Putting his right hand on the chest and under the arms of the infant, he lifted

the small nude specimen of humanity gently, and, with a muttered prayer, turned it upside down, dipping its head three times right into the water of the font, while with his left hand he splashed the pure lymph all over its back. Of course, the baby howled at such ablutions, what infant would not, for they were well-nigh sufficient to drown it, but he held each tiny creature securely and kindly till he placed it wet and dripping in its father's arms. The idea being that the father should receive his child back cleansed from sin by the hands of the Church.

Each nurse, when relieved of her charge, arranged the new coverlet under the father's chin and over his hands, as foreigners do their serviettes at table, and each man—especially the shy young officer—received the dripping squalling baby therein with an agonised expression of countenance. The father was obliged to hold his kicking and yelling infant till the priest had "dressed it in the clothes of the Church," by slipping the little chemise over its head and clasping the ribbon and cross round its neck. Even then, however, all was not ended. The infants had still to receive Holy Communion, there being, we understand, no confirmation ceremony in the Greek Church. This the priest administered by simply putting a small spoonful of mixed wine and water into each child's mouth. When this had been done the five fathers gave the five infants back to their nurses, who dressed them up and took them home.

New-born babies have their troubles in Russia, for such a christening must be a very grave trouble indeed, and thus they receive their cross, which they have to carry to the grave. Beneath the low-necked blouses of our cadets the chain was distinctly visible.

The Russian mazurka being a great institution, we asked our friend the Admiral, before leaving his ship, if his cadets might dance it for us.

"Certainly," he said. And they did, but as the decks were small and the dance intricate, we entreated the Admiral to let them come on shore one night and dance it at the

hotel. He very kindly agreed, so after eating the most delicious Russian sweets (*marmalada*) in his cabin, served on a great round meat dish, and congratulating him on his wonderful English, which he spoke most fluently, we left.

It is said no one can learn the Russian mazurka unless brought up to it from childhood; and, certainly, the figures are more intricate than the cotillion. Some of the steps resemble the Scotch reel or barn dance, especially when the dancers beat time with their heels, and we certainly think the swinging measure of the mazurka is often more knack than knowledge.

The ladies float through most of it, holding their arms on high as in the days of the old French minuet, but the men perform many more elaborate steps to a rattling time and tune. The Russian mazurka is a very long performance; indeed, it may go on all night, and as there are many figures, and all intricate, some one has to lead by word of mouth.

When one hears a man roaring for the first time in a ballroom, it sounds somewhat extraordinary, and yet this is the sort of thing which goes on during a Russian mazurka or quadrille.

"Ladies and gentlemen turn."

"Ladies in the middle."

"Gentlemen gallop round."

"Men on their knees."

"Ladies dance round them," etc. These commands being given incessantly for an hour, or perhaps two, until the unfortunate director is worn out and weary, and hoarse into the bargain.

It is a gift to be a good director, and any man who shows aptitude for this rôle has generally little time to dance, and has to work very hard during the evening's entertainment.

There is no doubt about it that the mazurka, when danced by stately court folk, is a very elegant and beautiful form of the terpsichorean art, although when young people

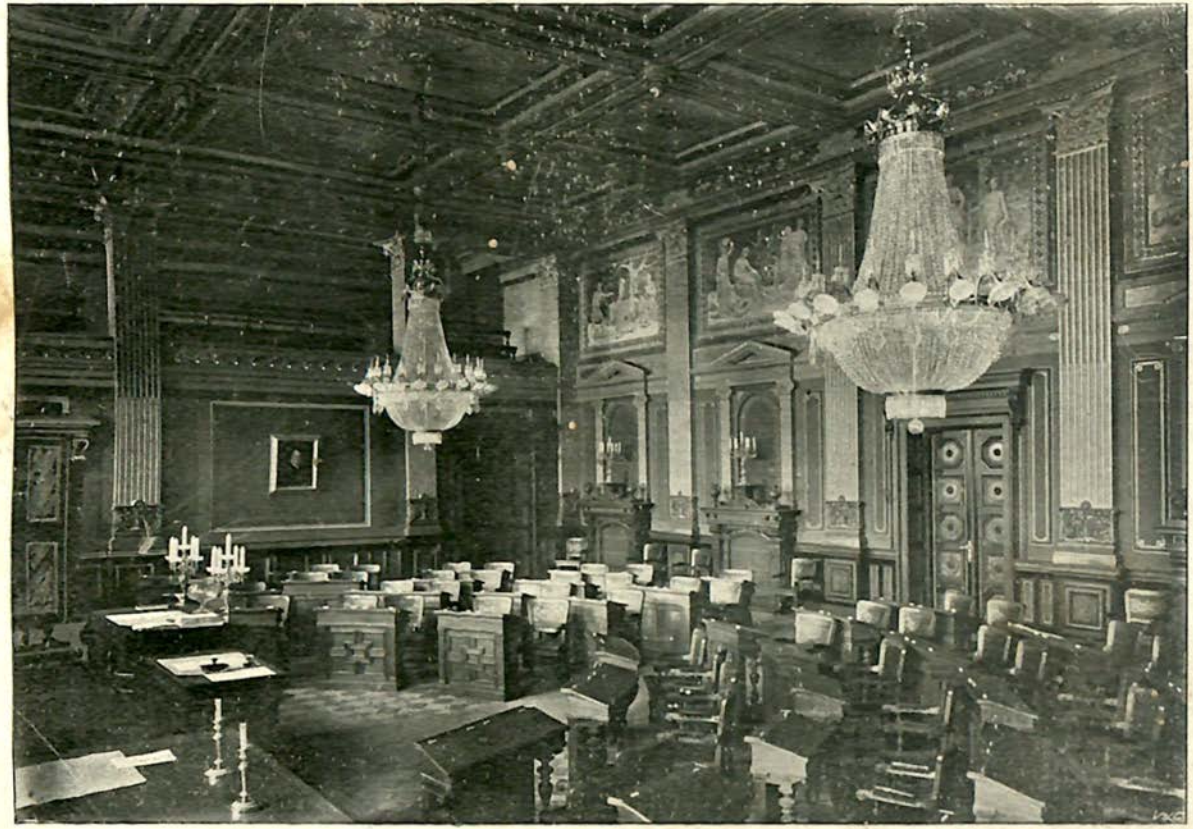
get together it is apt to degenerate into something of a romp.

It was with sincere regret that we left *Hangö*, for to us leaving *Hangö* meant leaving Finland. Ten weeks previously we had landed on those shores, strangers in a little-known country, where we met with warm friends, whose hospitality we enjoyed more than it is possible to say.

We were tired and weary, for we had travelled far and seen much, and learnt, we hope, not a little. If in this endeavour to give our impressions of *Suomi* as we saw it we have failed, the kind friends dwelling on the borders of Lapland and Russia must forgive us, and remember that few books exist by which to correct our impressions. They must not forget, either, that all our information was gleaned either by means of observation, and naturally English eyes look at many things differently from Finnish, or by the willing translations of those we met, who always had to speak what to them was a foreign language, and, generally, indeed, almost always, a strange one to us. We were therefore both at a disadvantage, and we cannot help smiling as we remember some of our struggles to understand properly what the dear folk wished to impart.

Our eyes were tired with sights, our minds were chaotic with strange ideas and tongues, but yet we felt how misunderstood that beautiful country is, how well worthy of careful study, and what a delightful new field it opens up to the traveller who, though he believes he "knows all Europe," yet has omitted *Suomi*, one of her quaintest gems.

The days of prophecy are over; but as these pages are about an old-world land, a land that like Rip van Winkle has been sleeping, we may perhaps be allowed to predict that, having at last wakened from her long slumber, *Suomi* will rise to distinction, for this younger generation of Finlanders, as Ibsen says, is now "knocking at the door" of nations.



CHAMBER OF PEASANT REPRESENTATIVES

APPENDIX

QUESTIONS OF NATIONALITY AND POLITICS

THE conquest of Finland by Sweden (1157-1323) placed the former country within the limits of European culture. From that time the Finnish nation has been included within the ranks of the civilised countries of Western Europe.

The scanty information that has come down to us on the condition of the ancient Finns in heathen times, before the Swedish invasion, shows that, although divided among themselves into hostile clans, and without a common bond of union, they were probably not on a lower degree of culture than their Scandinavian neighbours. They lived in large village communities, governed by elected or hereditary chiefs, they pursued agriculture, made iron out of the native ores, traded by sea, were doubtless pirates like the Scandinavian Vikings, and had special trading places, which were frequented even by foreigners. To judge from numerous coins and antiquities, they stood in trading relations even with Byzantium and the far-off Orient. Among the Scandinavians the Finns were known by their skill in making arms and by their witchcraft. As to the latter belief, it had, doubtless, its origin in the old Finns' Shaman rites, but was also nourished by their Runic songs, in which faith in the supernatural power of the wise but hidden *word* prevailed.

The Swedish conquest united the Finnish clans under one government, and thus founded the unity of the Finnish nation. The free order of communities of Swedes was introduced into Finland, where it soon took up its abode owing to the support of the large class of free peasantry which had existed from olden times.

The Finnish peasant has always preserved this freedom, notwithstanding its having been repeatedly threatened by a

powerful aristocracy during the greatness of Sweden. The chief safeguard of the peasantry's independence was its representative right in parliament (*landtdag*), hence its right of self-taxation and self-legislation. From 1362 the Finnish peasant has been in possession of his political rights.

The chief advantage that the Swedish government brought with it for Finland was accompanied, however, by a drawback that gradually became a heavy burden. The Finnish language was set aside! Swedish became the language of culture and education. Swedish was exclusively used in all government offices, all courts of justice, and, by degrees, it became the language by preference among the higher classes. The growing literature appeared in Swedish, and was naturally inaccessible to the mass of the people. In the churches alone the services were held in Finnish, and, in order to preserve the people's knowledge of reading, the clergy provided a translation of the Bible, and published books and pamphlets, mostly of a religious or economic nature.

Situated between the two rival realms, Sweden and Russia, Finland became, at short intervals, the scene of bloody wars which were conducted by those states against each other. Great parts of the country were thereby desolated and the population diminished. These circumstances gradually crushed the newly aroused patriotism of the Finnish people. Besides, this brought about material weakness, which naturally left a deadening effect on their independent intellectual development.

An era remarkable in this respect was the great Northern war (1700-1721), at the end of which the population of Finland was reduced to a third, and its devastated land divided between hostile powers. Another division of the country (1743) only contributed still more to weaken the national strength. All that remained of this strength was required to maintain the union with Sweden, which was apparently the only salvation of the nation's existence. It seemed like a presentiment of the approaching parting, that the intellectual bonds between Finland and Sweden became strengthened. The Swedish tongue also spread among the lower classes in the towns, and this language was considered by many a protection, not for their inherited civilisation alone, but for their constitution and liberty.

At the meetings of Parliament, the representatives of Finland repeatedly insisted that measures should be taken to induce officials and judges to learn the language of the people.

These demands, however, the justice of which was always acknowledged in theory, rarely produced any practical results.

Such was the state of matters when Finland at last, after a heroic defence, was conquered (1808) by Russia. The high-minded and liberal emperor, Alexander I., considered that the new conquest could not be better preserved than by attaching his new subjects with bands of affection to himself. Consequently, he solemnly enforced Finland's constitution, made, at an extra parliamentary meeting in *Borgâ* on his accession to the throne in 1809, a speech to the elected representatives of the Finnish people, declaring that Finland now had taken her position among the nations. Besides this he re-united to Finland those parts which, at an earlier date, had been separated.

The politics of Finland are particularly interesting, for *Suomi* is one of the few countries enjoying Home Rule. There is a very excellent book on the political law of Finland by Senator Mechelin, which has been translated into English by Charles Cooke, the British Vice-Consul of *Helsingfors*. The information therein is so concise and clear, we have ventured to quote somewhat freely from its pages.

It was in 1809, by a decree published at *Borgâ*, that the following declaration to the inhabitants of Finland was published :—

French Original	English Translation
Les destinées de la Providence nous ayant fait prendre en possession le Grand Duché de Finlande, Nous avons voulu, par l'acte présent, confirmer et ratifier la religion et les Lois fondamentales du Pays ainsi que les priviléges et droits, dont chaque classe dans le dit Grand Duché en particulier, et tous les habitants en général, qu'ils aient une position élevée ou inférieure, ont joui jusqu'ici selon la Constitution. Nous promettons de maintenir tous ces avantages et lois fermes et inébranlables dans leur pleine force.	Providence having placed Us in possession of the Grand Duchy of Finland, We have desired, by the present act, to confirm and ratify the religion and fundamental Laws of the Land, as well as the privileges and rights, which each class in the said Grand Duchy in particular, and all the inhabitants in general, be their position high or low, have hitherto enjoyed according to the Constitution. We promise to maintain all these benefits and laws firm and unshaken in their full force.

Two days later, at a solemn audience held in the Cathedral, the Tzar received the homage of the Estates as Grand Duke of Finland. The Estates took the oath of fealty to the new Sovereign, and affirmed, at the same time, the inviolability of the Constitution ; the Emperor's declaration was read aloud, the document was delivered into the custody of the Marshal of the House of Nobles ; after which a herald

of noble birth stood before the throne and proclaimed: "Vive Alexandre I., Empereur de toutes les Russies et Grand-duc de Finlande!"

The ceremony concluded with a speech from the Emperor, in the French language, bearing witness to the sentiments with which he had received the homage and oath of the country's representatives, and testifying that it was an *act of union* that had just been effected.

The Emperor and Grand Duke submitted to the Diet propositions on the four following questions:—

1. The organisation of the Government of the land, or the institution of a State Council.
2. Taxes and finance.
3. Military organisation.
4. Monetary system.

Thus was Finland's new destiny inaugurated.

The conqueror found himself in the presence of a people firmly attached to their political institutions and their civil laws, the liberal principles of which had taken root in the minds and habits of the citizens. To have employed physical force in order to incorporate this country with Russia would not have accorded with the Emperor's personal views, nor conduced to the immediate pacification which the political interests of the empire necessitated. Hence Alexander preferred "an act of union." He confirmed the old Constitution; and summoned the representatives of the nation, so as to establish, conjointly with them, the new order of things.

The Finlanders, foreseeing the final issue of the war and the impossibility of a return to the past, could not hesitate to meet half way the proposals of the Emperor Alexander, who had given them, as a security for the future, the most formal assurance to maintain the former Constitution. In Sweden the king had been dethroned; the Swedish Government had no more power over Finland; the Finnish Estates, elected and assembled according to law, could alone at that moment represent with perfect right the Finnish people. Hence the authority they made use of in binding the inhabitants of the country by the oath taken to the new sovereign, on the basis of the Constitution confirmed by him, was acknowledged both by the Emperor and the people. The Emperor expressed this in his manifesto "to all the inhabitants of Finland," published at *Borgå*, 23rd March 1809. No protest was heard in the country.

The union thus established was clearly defined by the Emperor, not only in the above-mentioned speeches of 29th March and 18th July 1809, but also on other occasions, for example, in the edict of the 15th-27th March 1810, concerning the militia, from which we extract the introduction:—

His Imperial Majesty's Gracious Manifesto.

From the moment that, through the Will of Providence, Finland's destiny was entrusted to Us, it has been Our aim to rule that Land in conformity with the liberties of the Nation and the rights assured to it by its Constitution.

The proofs of devotion the Inhabitants have given Us since the Oath of Fealty, which they tendered to us of their perfect free will, through their Representatives assembled at the Diet, have only conduced to strengthen Us in that purpose.

All the steps we have hitherto taken, with regard to the internal administration of the Country, are simply a consequence of an addition to that fundamental idea. The maintenance of the Religion and the Laws, the summoning of the Estates to a General Diet, the formation of a State Council in the Nation's midst, and the inviolability of the judicial and administrative authority, afford sufficient proofs to assure the Finnish Nation (Finska Nationen) of its political existence and the rights appertaining thereto.

As is shown by the preceding, Finland presented, at its union with Russia, a country where the upper classes spoke a language different from that used by the people. It is a remarkable fact that of the Swedish-speaking upper class by far the greater number was of the same origin as the body of the people. This body of the people, with a language that was almost unrecognised in their own country, did not consist of serfs or farm-hands, but of free landowners with their own servants and labourers. That such a state of things could not last long soon became clear to every thoughtful person.

Already during past centuries the scientific and lighter literature, although written in Swedish, had been inspired by a national spirit. Henrik Gabriel Porthan, professor at the University of *Åbo*, had devoted his life to deep researches into the history, language, and folklore of the Finnish people, and a great many of his disciples followed in his footsteps.

The cultured Finn, spite of his Swedish mother-tongue, had always considered himself a member of the Finnish nation. The altered circumstances on which Finland entered subsequent to her union with the mighty Russian empire had the effect of inspiring earnest patriots with the gravest anxiety.

Was there any possibility for Finland to maintain its home policy, or, indeed, its national life? If such a possibility existed, could it be looked for anywhere else than in an unanimous and national feeling? It would take us too long, however, to follow step by step Finland's struggle for nationality. Suffice it to say, the idea conveyed in the words of the young university student, Arvidson: "Swedes we are no more, Russians we cannot become, therefore let us be Finns," gained general acceptance, and its meaning began gradually to be clearly understood.

The national consciousness gathered fresh impulse from the appearance of the great poem *Kalevala:* songs descending from heathen times were written down by Elias Lönnrot from the lips of the people, as described in a former chapter. The national feeling was intensified by the great poet Johan Ludvig Runeberg in no small degree. In his poems, inspired by a glowing love for the Finnish fatherland, he glorified the courage, faithfulness, and honour of the Finnish people. Although written in Swedish, the poems, successfully translated, have become the property of the whole population.

As long as the Finnish national movement kept within the limits of abstract theory, it did not meet with any opposition; but when demands were made for practical execution it became quite another matter. The chief champion of the national cause was *Johan Vilhelm Snellman*, whose work, at first in the journal *Saima* (1844-1847), and later in *Litteraturklad för allmän medborgerlig bildning*[1] (1847-1863), grew to be of epoch-making importance for Finland. With much penetration Snellman proved that the existence of the Finnish people depended on the preservation and development of their language. The West-European civilisation, that had been imparted to the Finnish nation, would never take firm root if only supported by a small upper class—it ought to become the property of the whole people, and that could only be brought about by the upper classes returning to the use of the Finnish tongue, and by this language being introduced as a subject of instruction in the high schools, and as the language of government offices, courts of justice, and of all placed in authority. By their language separated from the people, the governing body could only be incompetent guardians of the laws and institutions of the country. They could not even, in

[1] *Journal for Literature and General Instruction in Civic Affairs.*

the long run, preserve their own language. They could be turned into Russians any day by imperial order; and that, in this case, the Russian language would succeed the Swedish was a natural consequence, clearly understood by every thinking person.

Snellman's ideas were embraced with enthusiasm by the greater part of the educated classes, particularly so by the university students. However, they were soon met with indirect attacks, and, at last, with direct opposition. Above the great body of government officials was a bureaucracy, powerful in consequence of its union with Russia, and irresponsible as regards public opinion. This bureaucracy noted with dread every liberal utterance, as it had its own interest in keeping up the lingual dualism. The journal *Saima* was prohibited, Snellman persecuted, and the Finns' linguistic troubles made a matter of suspicion in Petersburg, as supposed to have a political purpose.

The censorship, which even in Finland had been applied with great severity during the reign of Emperor Nicholas I., was made still more drastic in reference to Finnish literature by the draconic and almost unique clause of 8th April 1850. This clause prohibited the publication in Finnish of writings other than religious, and those of some economic use.

The prohibition included expressly the spreading of political news, as well as the publication of novels, either originals or translations, though in other respects they might be found inoffensive by the "censor." Characteristic of this time of nervous dread is the fact that this clause was provoked by a Finnish translation of Alexandre Dumas' story about Wilhelm Tell, and the war of independence in Switzerland. The newly born Finnish literature, and especially the journalistic press, was already on the point of being strangled in its cradle.

However, Finnish patriots, or the so-called *Fennomans*, with tough obstinacy continued to act. Neither could the senseless prohibition be maintained any longer. The government understood the necessity of slackening the reins and keeping the people *au courant* with the events connected with the war in the East of 1853-1856, operations of which were partly carried on near the coasts of Finland. The Finnish newspaper press regained its former position, and has continued to be a social factor as important and indispensable as the press in other civilised countries. Upon the accession to the throne of Alexander II., a new and happier era arose for Finland.

Parliament, which had not met during the late government, was revived again. Snellman was nominated member of the Senate, and brought about the Ordinance of 1st of August 1863, by which the Finnish language was declared entitled to the same rights as the Swedish, and the lingual war in Finland, which hitherto had been almost exclusively conducted against the authorities, was aroused to fresh life.

At the University in *Helsingfors* a small clique of students and lecturers openly pronounced themselves to be Swedes, and made it their business to fight for the predominance of the Swedish language in the country. At first they did not receive much sympathy, but after the dissolution of the so-called "liberal party," their opinions gradually prevailed within the greater part of the Swedish-writing press. This new party was called the *Svecoman*. The late "liberal party," although at heart friendly disposed to everything Swedish, had, however, assumed an attitude of impartiality. The present *Svecomans* declare their purpose to be the maintenance of the Swedish tongue and Swedish nationality in Finland. In support of their theory they not only plead historic right, but also the existence of the Swedish-speaking peasantry along the coasts of Finland. These number about 300,000, and, in the opinion of the *Svecomans*, their independence seems to be threatened. The action of the *Svecomans* has led to determined opposition on their part to any concessions to the just claims of the Finnish-speaking population. The aristocracy, the wealthier merchants in the towns, and the higher officials are adverse to the Finnish language, the acquisition of which is laborious, and, as the tongue of the lower classes, they consider it rough and uncivilised. It will be seen, therefore, that the *Svecomans* have not been without influential support in their agitation. The linguistic struggle was carried on with the keenest feeling in schools of higher education. These were all without exception Swedish-speaking until 1858, and all were supported at the cost of the government of Finland. If the Finnish language ever came to rank among those of civilised nations, if the country ever came to be governed by Finnish-speaking officials and functionaries, judges, etc., then it ought to be accepted as a first condition that the teaching in higher schools should be conducted in Finnish. It seems as if these claims ought not to have been considered unreasonable, least of all by the Swedish-speaking inhabitants of the country for whose benefit the State supported more schools than they could fill with pupils. Such

was, however, the case. Very characteristic is the fate which befell the Finnish department in the Normal School in *Helsingfors*. It had been established (1866) during Snellman's senatorship, but immediately after Snellman's retirement it was threatened with withdrawal of support. The leading members of the Senate as well as the whole *Svecoman* party seemed to consider it unnatural and unjust that a Finnish School should exist in Finland's capital! In spite of the fact that four estates of the country at the parliamentary session (1872) sent in a petition as to the maintenance of the Finnish department in the Normal School, the Senate brought about an Imperial Order for its withdrawal and the establishment of a special Finnish Normal School in *Tarastehus* in its place. However, the intention to keep the capital free from Finnish Schools was defeated; the *Fennomans* sent out an appeal to the whole nation, who, with rare generosity, hastened to collect within a short time a capital of more than 200,000 marks. By means of this sum was secured the existence of a private Finnish High School with the same curriculum as in the State Schools. This example was soon followed in several country towns, where schools were opened by means of voluntary contributions, with Finnish as the language for instruction. After a while, when the *Fennoman* party came into power, these schools were taken over by the State. At present there are fourteen Finnish and nine Swedish colleges, besides the higher boys' and girls' schools which are State schools. A great many Lyceums and mixed schools (on the American model) have, moreover, been started by means of private enterprise. Both, Swedish as well as Finnish, receive contributions from the State. Notwithstanding this the battle of language in connection with education cannot be considered as completely fought out. Still the schools, supported by the government, do not stand in fair proportion to the great number of the Swedish and Finnish-speaking population. There may still be found in purely Finnish districts, schools where Swedish is the medium of instruction solely for the benefit of a few officials' families. The *Svecomans* regard these schools as safeguards for the Swedish element in the country. It thus appears that the fight for the Swedish-speaking population really was nothing else than a fight for class interests.

The dispute has become particularly acute with regard to the board schools. According to the Education Code every parish is bound to provide an adequate number of schools, and in those districts where Finnish as well as Swedish is spoken

by a sufficient number of families, schools must be provided for each language. The parishes that are most concerned by this statute are the Swedish-speaking, for in most of them a not inconsiderable minority of Finns are living. The vestries, stirred by agitators, were anxious to escape the duty of supporting schools for the convenience of the latter. In one parish a certain baronet opposed the opening of a school for the Finnish parishioners amounting to the number of about 1000. In order to enforce his argument he pleaded that if English labourers settled in France, or *vice versâ*, they could hardly expect to have special schools for their accommodation! In order to prevent the possibility of Finnish spreading in Swedish-speaking parishes, the *Svecoman* newspapers frequently insist that no employer in those districts should take Finns in his pay, and that the Finnish labourers already settled there should be dismissed without delay. It is sad to know that such demands have been complied with in several instances. On the other hand, a boycott has sometimes been brought about by *Fennomans* against tradesmen distinguished by their pronounced *Svecomania*. The Finnish-speaking public has avoided all trade with them, and in this manner made them materially suffer for their political views. Fortunately, such instances of party hatred are exceptional.

The accusation that has been made against the *Fennomans* to the effect that they wish to extirpate the Swedish language in the country has been constantly denied by them. They acknowledge that the custom of centuries renders it necessary for the educated Finn to know Swedish, but the general use of Swedish they oppose. As to the Swedish-speaking peasant, the *Fennomans* have more than once declared that his rights shall remain intact, and that he shall never sink to the position formerly occupied by his Finnish brother. However, these assurances have hitherto fallen on deaf ears, and the domineering *Svecoman* clique in *Helsingfors*, continues to sow hatred between the two nationalities, a hatred that would be serious but for the good sense and good feeling of the Finnish peasant. Yet, nowadays, the lingual question is not the only point of difference between *Fennomans* and *Svecomans*. These divisions have by degrees developed into political parties which struggle for the upper hand in Parliament, vacancies in the Senate, etc. At the present time the *Svecomans* are in the majority in two estates, namely that of the nobility and the merchants, while the *Fennomans* form the majority among the

clergy and the peasantry. Thus in Parliament two of the estates might stand against two on several important questions, and a decision could only be attained by compromise. Meanwhile, the predominance of the *Svecomans* in the third estate is due to the fact that the elections to this estate are not made per head, but on a property qualification consisting of the amount of capital possessed and a scale of parish taxes. Thus, a well-to-do man may make use of twenty-five votes while a poor one has but one. The *Fennomans* wish to abolish this unjust system, or, at least, change it in such a manner as to reduce the greatest number of votes to ten. The *Svecomans*, however, who naturally understand that a change in the mode of election would leave *Fennomans* in the majority in the third estate, energetically oppose such an alteration as that indicated above.

It is difficult to decide the actual relations of each party to the principal political and social questions of the day. The *Svecomans* elect to call themselves *liberal*. They insist on religious liberty in its most complete form, on free trade and the abolition of all protective duties, etc. At the same time, however, they exert all their strength for the maintenance of a gentry of a different nationality from the people; they oppose every suggested alteration in the mode of parliamentary elections in the towns by which the working class might increase its political influence. It cannot be denied that their liberal programme is therefore somewhat limited.

There is one question, however, on which *Fennomans* and *Svecomans* hitherto have been united—in resistance to Russian experiments of amalgamation. Against the malicious attacks of Russian newspapers the *Fennoman* and *Svecoman* press have both constantly acted unanimously. Party spirit, fortunately, has not destroyed all sense of duty towards the common Finnish fatherland.

The attitude of the Russian government towards Finland, and towards the solution of her home questions, has been changeable. At first the Finnish movement was looked upon with indulgence, in the hope that the old relations to, and sympathies for, Sweden might cease. Later on this same movement, being regarded in the light of democratic agitation, became suspected and crushed. However, the liberal and high-minded Emperor Alexander II. understood the purely social significance of the Finnish national movement, and issued an order that the Finnish language by degrees should be

entitled to the same right as the Swedish. The execution of his reforms were meanwhile retarded by Finland's own *Svecoman* government. At the beginning of his reign Alexander III. decidedly favoured the *Fennomans* and gave posts in the government to some of their leaders. The Finnish language then became on a par with the Swedish in several fields, but the latter still remained the official language.

Plans made towards the end of the reign of Alexander III., without consulting the Finnish people, to effect a change in the constitution of the country, and with a view to turn it into a Russian province, were met with an indignant resistance all over the country, and caused the Russian Governor-General, Count Heiden, to turn his anger against the *Fennomans*, who hitherto had been encouraged by him. Meanwhile, the new Emperor, Nicholas II., had dissolved the commission appointed to codify the Constitution of Finland, and declared that he intended to keep the laws and privileges of Finland intact. This encourages the hope that the reign of the young emperor will continue on the same generous lines, and that Home Rule in Finland may continue a success.

Although Finland governs itself—

The Emperor and Grand Duke has the right, in criminal matters, to pardon, to commute the penalty of death, to pronounce the rehabilitation of, and to return forfeited property.

The Emperor and Grand Duke commands the military forces, provides for the defence of the country, declares war, concludes treaties of peace, of alliance, and so forth.

The Emperor and Grand Duke appoints to the higher offices of State.

He has the right of conferring titles on persons who have particularly well merited of the Sovereign or of the Country; he may also raise nobles to the rank of baron or count.

By means of naturalisation, the Emperor may grant to foreigners and Russian subjects the status of Finnish citizens.

We will notice later on the manner in which the above-mentioned prerogatives and privileges of the executive, a part of which has been delegated to the Finnish Senate, are exercised.

Legislative power is exercised conjointly by the Emperor and Grand Duke, and the Diet of the country.

We learn from Senator Mechelin's book that—

The Emperor is assisted in the work of governing Finland by the Senate, the Governor-General, and the Secretary of State's office.

Organisation of the Imperial Senate of Finland

The Senate is composed of two departments—that of Justice, which is the supreme tribunal, and the Administrative Department, which manages the general administration of the country.

The two departments, united, form the "Plenum" of the Senate. The Governor-General presides both over the Plenum and over each of the departments,[1] which is composed of ten members, including a Vice-President.

The Administrative Department comprises the six following sections:—home affairs, finance, control, military matters, public worship and instruction, agriculture and public works.

Each of these sections has a senator at its head, besides which, two senators are deputy-heads of the home affairs and finance sections; the Vice-President and one of the members of the Administrative Department have no portfolios.

The Plenum of the Senate is composed of the President and all the senators, or, according to the nature and importance of the business in hand, of four senators from each department, besides the President.

In the absence of the Governor-General, one of the Vice-Presidents takes the chair; in the Departments, the oldest senator present presides at the Plenum.

The senators are appointed by the Emperor for a period of three years, at the expiration of which their appointment may be renewed. All the senators of the Department of Justice, and at least two of the members of the Administrative Department, ought to be competent to discharge the functions of a judge.

All matters to be discussed are reported upon by referendary-secretaries, except financial questions, the report of which is entrusted to the controllers of the financial departments of the Senate. The referendary-secretaries and the controllers are appointed by the Emperor.

All cases are decided by a majority of votes, the President having a casting vote should there be an equal division.

In the sections of the Administrative Department the head senator alone, or his deputy, decides as to the resolutions to be taken on the report of the referendary-secretary, or of the controller.

The Procurator-General has the right of being present at the sittings of the Senate, without, however, voting, or taking part in the deliberations. He is appointed by the Emperor, as is also his deputy and assistant.

The Senate has a permanent committee for the preparation of projected measures, working under the guidance of a senator, appointed

[1] In practice, however, the Governor-General is rarely present, as he is seldom able to follow the debates, which are conducted in Swedish.

by the Senate, for each legislative measure with which the Committee is charged. The Plenum of the Senate appoints the members of the Committee for a period of three years.

Persons interested in military matters may like to know the following:—

Military Jurisdiction

Each army corps has a military tribunal composed of officers.

This court has jurisdiction in all cases of offences against the military laws committed by members of the army, as also in cases of crimes perpetrated by them in time of war. The military auditor, appointed by the Department of Justice of the Senate, performs the function of public prosecutor. He must be a jurist. The chief military tribunal, established at Helsingfors, is constituted of a President, appointed by the Emperor, and four members—three of whom are officers nominated by the Governor-General for two years; the fourth is a chief auditor nominated by the Emperor on the recommendation of the Department of Justice of the Senate.

This tribunal takes cognisance, in the second instance, of appeals from the decisions of the military tribunals. It tries, in the first instance, certain cases determined by the law.

The Department of Justice of the Senate is the final court of appeal to which resort can be had in military matters.

Personal military service is compulsory for every Finnish citizen.

We have several times referred to the Governors of Provinces, so it may be well here to enumerate a few of their duties:—

The Governor's functions are very numerous.

He must see to the public order and safety, and to the maintenance of roads and bridges.

He is the head of all the provincial police branches.

He executes the sentences of tribunals.

He orders the levying of distress and executions.

He supervises, by means of Crown inspectors, the tenants of Crown lands.

He administers the State grain stores.

He controls the collection of direct taxes and excise, and the administration of the provincial pay-offices.

He presides over the higher recruiting commission.

He is the agent of the Senate in all matters for which the province has no special officials or agents.

The decisions of the communes in certain cases require the Governor's sanction.

He directs the attention of the Senate and of the Governor-General to any measures calculated to promote the prosperity of the province.

He presents every year, to the Emperor and to the Senate, a report on the condition of the province entrusted to him.

The functions of the Governor place him in communication, not only with the home section, but also with the other sections of the Administrative Department of the Senate.

Again we take the liberty of quoting from the Public Laws of Finland.

THE DIET

General Provisions.—The Estates of the Grand Duchy of Finland are composed of four orders—the nobles, the clergy, the burgesses, and the peasantry. Each of these orders has the same authority.

The Estates assemble at least every five years at an ordinary Diet, convoked by the Emperor and Grand Duke, who may also convoke an extraordinary Diet; the authority of the latter, however, does not extend beyond the matters assigned as the motive for its convocation, or which may be submitted to it by the Emperor.

The Diet meets in the capital of the Country.

The normal duration of an ordinary session is four months, but it may be prolonged, and may be closed before this term, on the application of all the orders, or should the Emperor deem it expedient to dissolve the Diet.

The Order of the Nobility.—All the heads of noble families, duly inscribed on the rolls of the "House of Nobles," have a hereditary right of representing this order. In case of the abstention of the head of a family, the right of sitting at the Diet may be exercised by another member of the family, following the order of progeniture. If, in the time prescribed by law, no member of the family has presented himself in order to take his seat at the Diet, the head of the family may delegate his right, by power of attorney, to a member of another noble family.

At present the number of noble Finnish families is 237, of whom 7 are counts and 45 barons, the remainder having no titles.[1]

The total number of this order sitting at the Diet varies from 100 to 140.

The Order of the Clergy comprises:—

(*a*) The Archbishop and the two Bishops of the Lutheran Church.

(*b*) Twenty-eight representatives elected by the Lutheran clergy of the three dioceses.

[1] It will thus be seen that the word "nobility" comprises the non-titled gentry.

(*c*) One or two representatives elected by the professors and officials of Helsingfors University.

(*d*) From three to six representatives elected by the professors and teachers of the lyceums and other public schools.

The elections are conducted in the manner which the different classes of electors have respectively adopted for themselves; the system of direct elections has been fixed upon.

The Order of Burgesses is composed of the representatives of the towns. Every legally domiciled resident in a town, who is taxed according to the communal law and has duly paid his taxes, has the right of voting, except

The nobles, and those having the elective franchise in the order of the clergy;

Women, soldiers, sailors, and domestic servants.

Every town elects one representative for each 6000 inhabitants. But a town having less than 1500 inhabitants has the right of combining with another town whose population is less than 6000 in order to be represented.

The elections are direct in towns.

At the Diet of 1885 there were 54 members for towns.[1]

The Order of the Peasantry.—The rural communes elect one representative for each rural jurisdiction (*domsaga*), of which there are at present 60.

The right of voting belongs to every owner of real estate paying the land-tax, as also to all tenants of Crown property.

Government officials, and those belonging to any other order than that of the peasantry, have no vote.

The elections are in two stages. The electors of each rural commune choose an elector of the second degree, or more than one if the population of the commune exceeds 2000 inhabitants, each complete 2000 inhabitants giving the right to one elector of the second degree.

The electors of the second degree assemble before the judge of the district, and proceed to the election of a representative; each elector has one vote.

Electoral Qualification and the Suffrage.—Every Finnish subject of full age has the right to vote in the district in which he resides, regard being had to the above-mentioned special conditions for the election of members in the orders of the clergy, the burgesses, and the peasants. Religious profession does not affect the right to vote, but this right, in each of the three orders, is lost or suspended for the following reasons:—

(*a*) Tutelage.

[1] At the Diet of 1888, the towns were represented by 55 members, of whom 8 were from Helsingfors, the capital.

(*b*) Insolvency or bankruptcy.

(*c*) Condemnation to an ignominious punishment.

(*d*) Loss, by sentence of a court, of certain specified civil rights.

(*e*) Purchase or sale of votes, corruption or electoral fraud, offence against the liberty of suffrage.

In addition to which are excluded—

Those who have not been inscribed as Finnish citizens during the three years preceding the election.

Those who present themselves as electors in the electoral assembly of one order, after having already voted in another.

The right of voting cannot be exercised by proxy.

Every elector is eligible for election in the order to which he belongs, either in the district where he resides or in another, provided he has reached the age of twenty-five years, that he professes a Christian faith, and that he is not incapacitated from voting.

All that is enacted concerning the general conditions for the suffrage and the eligibility of candidates, as also concerning cases of incapacity, applies equally to the order of the nobility.

The Powers of the Diet

The Estates of the country, assembled at the Diet, represent the nation.

They exercise, conjointly with the Emperor and Grand Duke, the legislative power.

They vote taxes; they have their share in settling financial questions.

They govern, supervise, and control, through their delegates, the work of the State Bank (Bank of Finland).

They give their opinion on administrative projects submitted by the Emperor for their consideration.

They have the right of petition, of which they generally make use in order to ask for measures emanating from the governmental power; but they may also, by petition, pray for projected legislative measures.

Any member of the Diet has the right to propose a petition; this proposal must be made within fifteen days of the opening of the Diet; it is then submitted to a preliminary discussion by one of the committees of the Diet.

New taxes may not be imposed nor old ones altered or abolished without the consent of the Diet. The principle of the equality of all citizens in the eyes of the law—a principle held sacred by the ancient Swedish laws—has become sensibly modified in the course of centuries.

Every Finlander, without distinction of class, has a right to acquire real Estate. There are no class privileges in the matter of contribution to military service, neither are there any class privileges or distinctions as to admission to government offices or employment.

Liberty of conscience is recognised in principle.

There are three Courts of Appeal—*Abo*, *Wiborg*, and *Wasa*.

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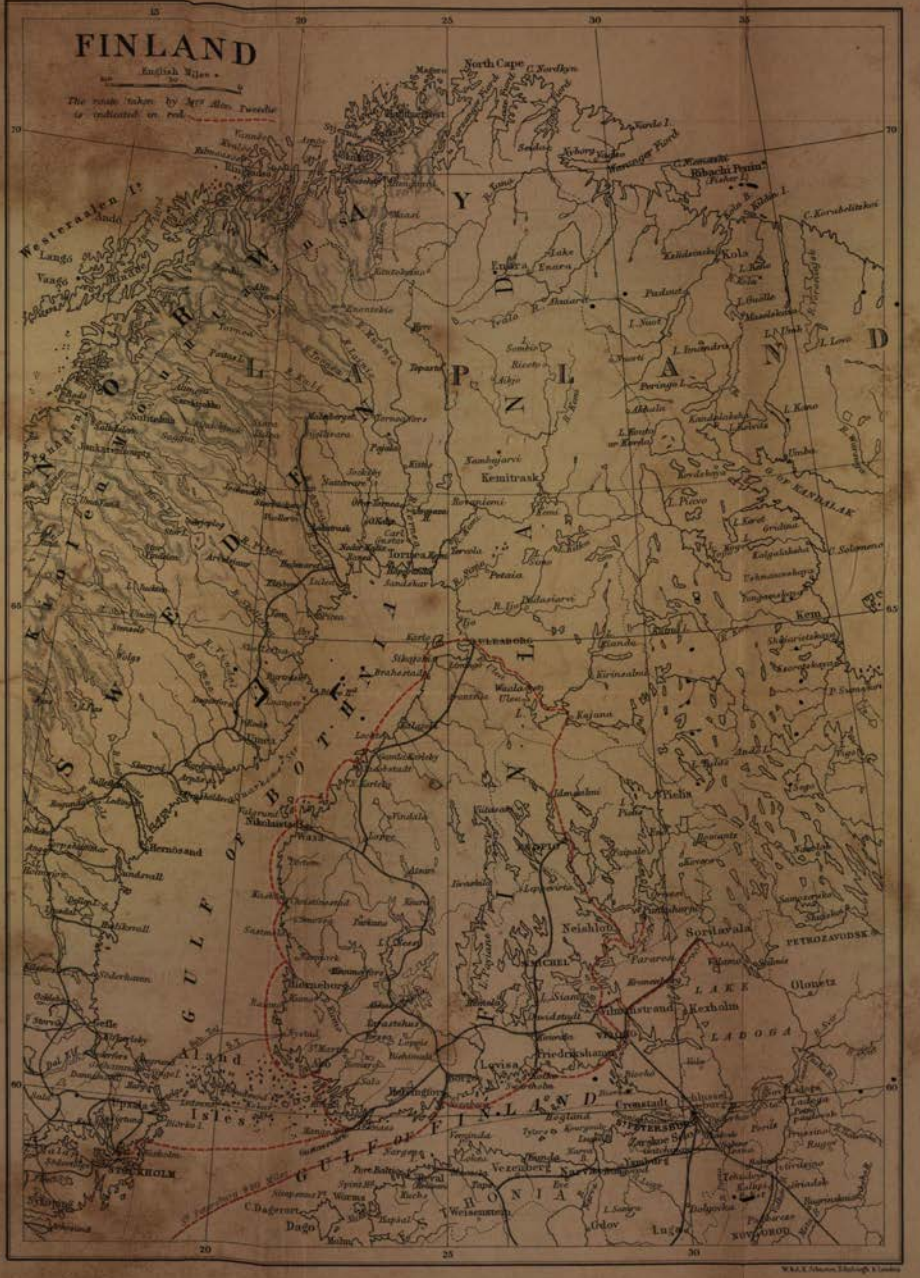
FINLAND
English Miles
The route taken by Mr. Alex. Tweedie is indicated in red
North Cape
C. Nordkyn
Magero
Hammerfest
Kvalöe I.
Sörö
Kiberg
Vardö
Vardö I.
Varanger Fiord
C. Kanin
Ribachi Penin.
Pasvik R.
Kilduin I.
C. Kovalskitskoi
Westeraalen I.
Andö
Langö
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Hindö
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Enara
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Imandra L.
Lovo L.
Kemitrask
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Pielis L.
Neishlot
Sortavala
Olonetz
Kexholm
LAKE LADOGA
Friedrichshamn
Lovisa
Helsingfors
Ekenäs
Tammerfors
Abo
Aland Isles
GULF OF FINLAND
GULF OF BOTHNIA
SWEDEN
FINLAND
RUSSIA
Hernösand
Nikolaistad
Wasa
Uleaborg
Brahestad
Gamla Karleby
Carlo
Torneå
Haparanda
Calix
Piteå
Lulea
Skellefteå
Umeå
Ume R.
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Lycksele L.
Storuman L.
Storuman
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Ammarnäs
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Quickjock
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Jukkasjarvi
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Kiruna
Kirunavara
Kirunavara Mt.
Luossajarvi
Luossajarvi L.
Kaitum L.
Kaitum R.
Jukkasjarvi R.
Torneå R.
Kalix R.
Kalix
Kalixbacken
Kalixbacken L.
Kalixbacken R.
Lainio R.
Lainio L.
Lainiovara
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Lainiovara R.
Muonio R.
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Muonioniska
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Kengis
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Kuttainen
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Kuttaisvara
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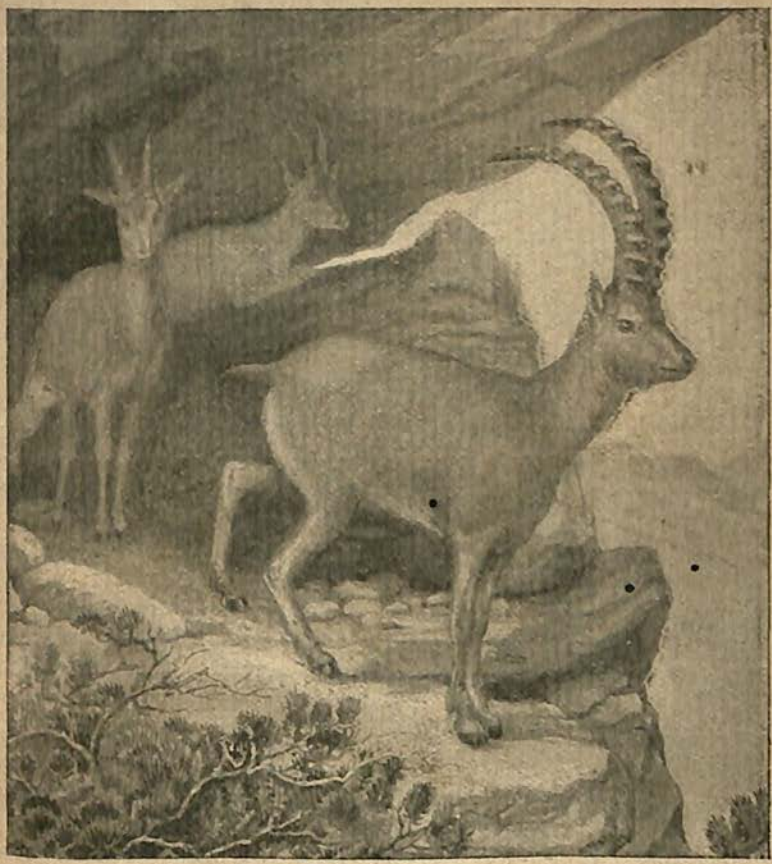

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